Mr Pryn

13

THE TESTIMONY OF A Cloud of Witneſſes,

Who in their Generation have teſtified againſt that horrible Evil of FORCING of CONSCIENCE, and PERSECUTION about Matters of RELIGION.

Whoſe *Teſtimony* may be ſeaſonable and ſutable for the preſent ſtate of the wiſe and learned men in *England*, whether of the *Magiſtrates* or of the *Clergy*; And may ſerve as a timely Warning to them all, of defiling their hands with that horrible filthy thing, which is already in part committed in the Land.

Compoſed together, and Tranſlated into Engliſh, *by a living Witneſs againſt the aforeſaid Evil,*

WILLIAM CATON.

God ſhall perſwade Japheth, *and he ſhall dwell in the Tents of* Shem, *and* Canaan *ſhall be his Servant*, Gen. 9. 27.

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their Teſtimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death, Rev. 12. 11.

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TO THE READER.

FRIEND,

IN theſe latter Dayes, the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath raiſed up many Witneſſes, who Faithfully bear their Teſtimony to the Eternal Truth, againſt the many Evils which ſuperabound in the World; but as the Teſtimony of his Faithful Witneſſes hath been heretofore Rejected by the World; in like manner is the Teſtimony of his Servants now, contemned and ſet at nought by the Wiſe and Learned of this World, who now with their Power and Wiſdom reſiſt the Almighty, as in Ages and Generations paſt: which thing I ſeriouſly obſerving, it entered into my Heart to manifeſt the Teſtimony of ſome of the Antients (who heretofore have been renowned in their Generations) to my Country-men, to the end, that both the Wiſe and Simple, Noble and Ignoble amonſt them, might ſee and perceive, how that the Almighty, even the Lord of Hoſts, hath ſo far opened the Underſtandings of many, as that he hath given them to ſee the Evil of that *horrible Evil*, (*viz.*) of *FORCING* of *CONSCIENCE*; which noyſome and hurtful thing hath been teſtified againſt by *Emperours* and *Kings*, and by other Potentates of the Earth, who by experience have found the Evil of it: And likewiſe it hath been witneſſed againſt by many Wiſe and Eminent Learned Men in their ſeveral Generations, even as it is now teſtified againſt, by the Servants and Hand-maids of the Moſt High, which is evidently manifeſted by this following Treatiſe.

To the Reader.

It hath been long upon me to produce this to our *Native Country*, and to publiſh theſe Teſtimonies in its own Language, that its Inhabitants might underſtand how other Kingdoms and Countries have been depopulated and ſpoyled, through their Perſiſting in the aforeſaid Evil; and that they alſo might be warned from running head-long in that evil Courſe unto Perdition, and thereby incur Deſolation upon the Land, and haſten the Lord's Judgements upon its Inhabitants.

Much I might have added to the further demonſtrating of this Evil, but being there is ſo much writ already concerning it, and ſo much teſtified daily againſt it, and that I was not deſirous to make a great *Volumn*, but chuſed much rather ſuch a *compendious Abſtract* as this; Therefore have I only inſerted their Teſtimonies, without any *Paraphraſing* upon them, which I leave unto thy juſt Jndgement.

Sometimes I have inſtanced the *Chronicle* or Hiſtory, in which they are to be found more at large, and ſometime I have not; for I believe that very few of them are extant in our Engliſh Language, and that there is not one among a thouſand in *England* that do know the *Chronologies*, out of which they have been extracted.

If that thou (*Courteous Reader*) do with the Spirit of Meekneſs peruſe this brief *Treatiſe*, then mayeſt thou reap of the Fruit of this my Labour of Love, the effects of which I ſhall leave unto the Lord, whoſe Power I know is ſufficient to make it effectual.

W. C.

Palatine in *Germany*, the
29th. of the firſt Month,
(called *March*) 1662.

The

The Epiſtle to the READER.

IT hath been the fervent labour and travel of my youth, to ſeek for, and to follow after the way of Righteouſneſs and Truth, and it hath ever been the very temper of my Spirit until this day, to affect Juſtice and Mercy; and the Virtues of the Lord God hath delighted my Soul, in what Perſon, and among what People ſoever as I have ſeen the ſame, and perfect Liberty and Freedom in all the wayes of God inwardly and outwardly, in all the exerciſe of godlineſs; and the Virtues of the Spirit *of Chriſt I have longed after, and according to that Light and Knowledge committed to me, theſe things have I followed that I might attain to the perfection thereof, to the fulfilling of my Faith and Patience in the enjoyment of theſe things, when God himſelf ſhould bring them forth in the World, and give his choſen People the poſſeſſion of the ſame as the Lot of their Inheritance.*

And for this Cauſe and the accompliſhing of this end, I have had my Portion of afflictions among many other; and I have ſuffered ſomewhat in Body and Spirit in my day, if poſſibly this may be obtained in the end (to wit) free, open, publick and perfect Liberty *in the exerciſe of Conſcience, in* Duty and Worſhip *to Godwards, in and through the whole World; This hath been and is the end of that long travelled Journey, which once obtained is a ſufficient reward for all Afflictions, and Tribulations, and Perſecutions ſuffered and endured in the way; and ſaving my Hope, and Faith, and Confidence in the Promiſes of God concerning this thing, the heart would faint, the Spirit fail, and the Soul be weary, and nothing could comfort my life: Thus it is not onely with me, but with many more like minded, who are all* Travellers, Mourners and diſconſolate, *till the Lord appear bringing with him* perfect Liberry of Conſcience *to all his People, now Oppreſſed and Impoſed upon with grievous Burdens of* Force *and* Violence, *concerning Worſhip and Duty to Godwards, under which Soul groans, Spirit grieves, Life mourns, and the Holy Seed is ſlain in all Nations through the World; and the Soul, Spirit, Life, and Holy Seed, Cryes unto God day and night, and are poured out before him,* How long Lord, how long,

when

when ſhall it once be, *That Perſons, Peoples, and Nations, ſhall offer Service, Obedience and Worſhip to thee, according to thy Teaching, and as they are led and perſwaded by thy Spirit? Free Service and Worſhip, and without force is that which God onely accepts, and by which he is glorified; 'tis the way of* true Worſhip, *'tis the way of Salvation, Duty and Service, in the exerciſe of the* free Spirit of the Lord, *in the hearts of his People, in this onely is he delighted; and all the exerciſe of that concern which is* by force *through* Impoſition, *is neither pleaſing to him, nor ſaving to the Soul, but abomination in his ſight, as Iniquity which his Soul hates, and a vexation of guilt unto the Righteous Soul: Hence may it be ſaid, wo unto Impoſed Worſhip and Service which is forced by outward Power, it grieves and vexes the God of Heaven unto Wrath and Indignation, and it wounds and oppreſſes the Immortal Soul unto Death and Damnation.*

Surely, It is contrary to the very purpoſe of God in Order of Creation, *who made and Ordained Mankind free from Bondage, and never brought him forth into the World to be a ſubjected ſlave to the will of another man, in things* Temporal, *much leſſe in things* Spiritual, *and relating to Eternity; and this work of Impoſing by force in matters of* Faith, Worſhip, and Duty to God, *of one man upon another, or of ſome Perſons over all, is certainly* an Act of Bondage and Slavery, *laid as a grievous yoak upon the necks one of another, and ſubjecting one another in Oppreſſion, not unto the good Will of the Creator, but unto the evil will of mortal periſhing and ſinful Creature, and this differing from and contrary to, the pure and perfect Order and Decree of Creation, which was bleſſed altogether; and whatſoever is degenerated by* Corruption, *and Erred through* Temptation *from that Pure and Holy Order of Creation, either in things* Wordly *or* Divine; *is in the Curſe and Oppoſition againſt the* Holy Creator, *and ſo is this thing of which I am now Treating, Impoſition upon Conſcience in matters* Divine *and* Temporal: *Force, exerciſed in* Spiritual *Caſes, is the higheſt Product of Degeneration, and the greater* degreſſion *from the Holy Order of* Creation; *for without Controverſie the* Creator *himſelf,* reſerved and retained *in his alone onely Power, the* Priviledge of Supremacy, *in and over the inward man, in all the* matters Immortal, *that he might be the onely Lord in that Caſe,*

and

and give Spiritual Law, to Command, and force thereby to exerciſe the Soul and heart, in Fear, Love, Faith, Worſhip, and Obedience to himſelf, *that he might be ſerved as the Lord over all, moſt chiefly in reſpect of the* Inward Spiritual and Immortal man; *This Power of Supremacy I ſay, he reſerved and retained in himſelf in the Creation to exerciſe over Mankind, and did not commit this Priviledge to any other; wherefore without Controverſie, it is an* Uſurpation of the Creators rightful Dominion, *it is a* robbing of him of his Dignity and Prerogative, *it is an Act of* Violence *done againſt* his Soveraignty, *an audacious intruding* into his *proper right*, and *a violating of the Law* and Decree of *Creation, for one Perſon, or one People, to aſſume to themſelves, Power, Authority and Government, over other Perſons and Peoples, in Commanding and Impoſing* in matters Spiritual, over their Conſciences in the Worſhip and Service of God; *and it is ſuch an* abomination *againſt the Creator both in the Cauſe and End of it, That he will ariſe and take Vengeance upon it, and he will eaſe himſelf of all ſuch his adverſaries.*

Again, It is contrary to the Law of Love, Unity, Fellowſhip, *and* Concord *among the ſons of men, by order of Creation, which God appointed to be among them; and by Impoſing in matters of* Spiritual concern, *as aforeſaid, that Love, Unity, Fellowſhip and Concord among men decreed in Creation, is broken and confounded, and diſannulled among them, by reaſon of the ſame, and Nations and Kingdoms hate and contend one with another; Neighbors and Brethren, cannot agree but fall into ſtrife one againſt another: Kings and their Subjects, Rulers and their People, are in diſcord, debate, Diſobedience and Rebellion one contrary to another, by reaſon* that Liberty of Conſcience in Worſhip and Duty to Godwards is wanting in the World, *and Impoſitions and force by outward Authority in that Caſe, are prevailing and in Power; And thus the Law of Love, Unity, and Concord, Decreed in Creation, is* violated, deſpiſed, and made voyd; *and hatred, diviſions, ſtrifes, and diſcords intraduced in its room, and abounds in the Spirits and viſible actions of the ſons of men through the World, to the woful effects of* killing, perſecuting, and deſtroying one another, *Nation of Nation, Neighbours of Neighbours, and Kings of their Subjects; occaſioned and grounded upon this thing as the Foundation of the ſame, (to wit)* Impoſing by force upon Conſcience in matters

Divine,

Divine. *Wherefore not onely againſt God is this evil extended,* to diſhonour and diſgrace him *as is ſhewed, but againſt man alſo is this* evil and miſchief in the effects of it *reached forth as ye have ſeen; and the Law of Creation is* violated, *both in reſpect of Creator and Creature. It is in its cauſe and ground ſo evil, in its works and effects ſo wicked and miſchievous, and in its end ſo provoking and damnable, and all this both in reſpect of God and man, that I have not yet Comprehended the* height and depth *thereof; though my Spirit from a Child hath often entered into the ſerious Conſiderations of this thing, with* mourning and ſorrow *becauſe of it, and with* teſtimony and abhorrance *againſt it; and at this hour I am a ſufferer in body and Spirit, becauſe of the ſame; Carnal Impoſition upon Conſcience in Spiritual things, wo unto it, my Soul hates, and my God will Plague in his ſeaſon.*

If I ſhould ſtudy in ſearching to find out, and to diſcribe all the evils, miſchiefs and wofull Inconveniences, and effects *of this Gulf out of which they aſcend, I might make this Epiſtle a large Volumn; but ſince that I have elſewhere written about this matter, I ſhall now Contract this, with the ſaying of the Apoſtle,* This Miſtery of iniquity doth work, untill he be taken out of the way; *Yea, this* Impoſition upon Conſcience *oppoſite to* perfect Liberty *in the exerciſe of the ſame, is the onely* Main, Material, Support, Prop, *and* Defence *of the Kingdome of Antichriſt throughout the World at this day: and whomſoever as are friends hereunto, they are friends to him, and they love his wayes, and are ſubjects of his Kingdome, and are rebellious againſt Chriſt, and to his Kingdome they are Enemies: Wherefore my heart and ſoul ſaith within me, would to God I had ſuch a gift of Demonſtration, by Pen or Tongue, and that the ſame were ſo forcible and Efficacious to awaken every ſoul, to an abhorrance and diſlike of that* Spirit, Principle and Practice of Impoſition upon Conſcience, *that there might be a total turning from the Kingdome* of Antichriſt, *which Conſiſts of* Falſhood, Darkneſs, Sin, and Enmity, of Bondage, Oppreſſion, and cruel Impoſitions *to the Kingdome of* Chriſt Jeſus, *which Conſiſts of* Truth, Light and Righteouſneſs, of freedome and perfect Liberty in Soul and Spirit; *Which Kingdome and Government, the Lord of Heaven and Earth will* promote and Exalt *in the Kingdomes of this World, which muſt become the*

King-

Kingdomes of the Lord and of His Christ, *according to Promiſe.*

It hath ever been my Judgment, That want of Liberty and free exerciſe of Conſcience *in Spiritual matters, and the Contrary Impoſed by worldly Power, and it remains ſtill with me, That this is one main Cauſe of the* Woful Diſtractions *in Kingdomes, of the* unſetledneſs *in States, and of many evil* Conſequences *abounding in the Governments of the World; and alſo the Cauſe wherefore the God of Heaven is angry and provoked againſt them, and for which Cauſe he will ſmite and wound, confound and overturn* Kingdomes, Powers, and Authorities, *even till he Reign whoſe Right it is; who onely and alone, will Rule in the* free exerciſe of Soul, Spirit, and Conſcience, *through the teachings of his own Spirit: And though much Oppoſition and great Contention have been made againſt this in the World, in which men have ſtriven againſt their own good and welfare, yet there is a day, and it haſtens to come* in Power, *when* Impoſition *upon Conſcience by outward worldly force in Caſes Divine, will be baniſhed the whole Fabrick of the Creation, and exiled into the pit of never-riſing* obſcurity and darkneſs, *and then ſhall the Sons of men be delivered from the* Violence of it, *and from all its* miſerable and miſchievous Conſequence; *Then ſhall the heritage of the Lord rejoyce in Joy unſpeakable, being delivered from the oppreſſion under which ſhe hath long* mourned, travelled, and groaned in deep diſtreſſe; *Then ſhall Nations delight in* amity *one with another; then ſhall Neighbours rejoyce in* Society *one among another; and then ſhall* Kings and Rulers *love their Subjects and People freely, and People ſhall* Obey and ſerve their Rulers *with a willing and* cheariul heart and mind; *Hereby the God of Heaven ſhould be Glorified, and all People become Bleſſed,* Amity, Love, Unity, and Concord, *and the firſt Creation order and Decree, would be reſtored between God and his Creatures, and alſo between man and man, in holy Covenant.*

And this matter (to wit) Concerning Liberty of Conſcience in the free exerciſe of Godlineſs) *hath been of theſe late years in great Debate and Conteſt among men in theſe Nations, and ſome have been of one Judgement, and others of a contrary about this matter, and the Contention hath ariſen very high, even unto Blood and loſſe of all; and is yet remaining* undetermined *in the minds and*

Spirits of many people, which ought to be reſolved in every heart through conviction by ſound Arguments of Truth and Divine reaſon; and men ought then to obey the ſame according to inward Spiritual Conviction; and this Caſe ought not to be determined *by* Carnal weapons, *forcibly Compelling people in the Caſe by the* Impoſitions of Conqueſt, *in a Violent way of outward Power: And ſince that, This is* a Caſe dubious, *whether* free Liberty of Conſcience in the exerciſe of Worſhip, or Impoſition about the ſame *is moſt worthy: I therefore upon this neceſſity calling upon me, with my willingneſs to aſſiſt in ſuch a work, would add my mite and grain of Knowledge and Wiſdome towards the* reſolving of ſuch a dubious and needful Caſe, *And have taken this opportunity and occaſion thus to declare my mind, and ſhall leave the effect hereof to the purpoſe and Providence of the Lord, who onely is Wiſe, to work whatſoever he will, by whomſoever he pleaſes; for he never yet limited himſelf to any one Inſtrument, in the bringing forth, and accompliſhing his purpoſe; however no man is to* diſpute *the Leadings and Commands of God, nor yet to meaſure his obedience to him, by* either objected, or real Conſequence, *in the fruits and effects of his obedience: And this is that warrant (to wit the leadings of God) under the Commiſſion of which, the Servants of God do Act in their Obedience, and diſputes not the Authority nor the Conſequence, but leaves the Iſſue of all things to him that Commands.*

The total ſum of this matter (to wit, Liberty of Conſcience) *is very large, and requires multitude of Words, and many arguments to unfold the Truth of it, the* vertue *of it, and the Evil* Cauſes, Works and effects *of the Contrary; but at this time I ſhall contract the ſum into, & ſtate it in this total head; Whether* it is not perfect Reaſon, Juſtice, and Equity, and that without all Exceptions, that every man upon the Earth, be permitted in the free exerciſe of Conſcience, without any kind of Force put upon him by any man to the contrary, to follow that Religion, and to live in ſuch Faith, and perform ſuch Worſhip to God, as he dares truſt his own Soul withal, and give account thereof before God in the day of dreadful Judgement.

My Judgement is on the affirmative Part, in anſwer to this Queſtion, and it is my Judgement in the Fear and Spirit of the Lord, that 'tis perfectly reaſonable, Juſt and Equal, *that every man in the*

World

World be permitted his Liberty in the free exercise of his Conscience, and that without any force imposed upon him to the Contrary, to follow that Religion, *and live in that* Faith, *and perform* that Worship to God, *with which he dares trust his own Soul to the Salvation thereof; and the contrary is* Unreasonable, Unjust and Unequal; *and this might be amplified in a large manner upon occasion: And this is not only my Judgement alone, nor the false Fancy of a single Person, but it is the* Faith *and* Judgement *of many more, and that not of Fools altogether, but of the Wise, not only of some few men of our Age, but of many Ages past, whose Principles were for the Toleration of* Liberty in the exercise of Conscience in matters Spiritual, *as in this small Treatise following more at large appears; to which, for proof of this Particular, and to second the Truth of my Judgement, I do refer the serious and well considerate Reader; in which small Piece, he may find the Judgements of divers Persons* asserted *by their own Sayings, concerning the very Case of* Liberty of Conscience; *and what esteem some* Kings and Princes, and Religious Men *have had of the same; for this following Piece (to which I am now prefacing) is no other than a certain sum of brief* Collections, of the Sayings of Emperors, Kings and Potentates, of former Ages, *contracted into this short method, for the better Intelligence of all that are inquiring about this occasion; and such is mine affection to the present* Contraction collected, *that I wish, that all the* Rulers and Princes *of our Age through the World, would seriously read, and rightly study the same, and improve it to their own advantage, in practising the Sayings of their Grave and Wise Progenitors; and oh that they would engross this small Piece in* their Records, *and enclose it in* their Closets, *and use the same as* Counsel and Instruction *to themselves in the Premises; the effect of it might prove happy to them, if their present Practise would be answerable to the Intimations of the Antients.*

And this small Piece happily ariving the harbour of my hands, through the tedious industry of the Collector, and through other passages of tempestious Dangers, which it lay liable unto; I have transported it over a serious view, and am affected with it unto my Commendation and approof; first of the matter it self, *and secondly* of its Author's pains and Industry, in forming of it into this

method, in which it now appears; *both of which I cannot but commend, and do alſo herewith recommend to the View, Conſideration, and Inſtruction of every impartial Reader, who muſt, and that every man for himſelf, be judge of the verity of what he Reads, even by the Light of the Spirit of Chriſt Jeſus in his own Conſcience; to which this is ſingly committed.*

From my place of preſent reſtraint, the 27th. day of the 7th. Month, 1662. E. B.

The

THE TESTIMONY OF A CLOUD of WITNESSES,

Who in their Generation have teſtified againſt that horrible Evil of *FORCING OF CONSCIENCE*, and *PERSECUTION* about Matters of *RELIGION*.

CHAP. I.

Concerning the Chriſtian Religion, how it is not to be planted, eſtabliſhed, nor defended by Weapons, nor by Violence; and how it doth not admit of any forcing of Conſcience.

A Certain *Chancellour*, ſpeaking before the *King* and his *Council* at *Orleans*, in praiſe of the Chriſtian Religion, ſaid, That thoſe that went about to Eſtabliſh the ſame by Weapons, did againſt their Calling, which is (ſaid he) to ſuffer Violence, and not to do it.

Herein differ we (ſaid *Chriſoſtomus*) from the Heathen, who do force and compel by Violence; but the Chriſtians they are patient and forbearing; neither hath our Religion had her beginning with Weapons (ſaid he) neither hath it been maintained by Weapons.

It is not the manner of the Children of God to Perſecute others to Death about their Religion, but it hath been, and is their Condition to be put to Death themſelves for the Teſtimony of the Truth; Moreover (ſaid he) the ſhedding of blood about

about Religion, is an evident token of Antichriſt. *Relig. Unyl. Pag.* 192.

That Religion which goeth about to ſet up a Sect, which ſeeketh not Peace, but ſpeaketh againſt all, and will ſuffer none equal with it, but will be alone Maſter, and exerciſe Lordſhip over the Faith of all others, and with the Civil Powers, perſecute thoſe that are of another Opinion, by ſhedding their blood, Baniſhing of them, and ſpoiling of their Goods, or with War and Fighting Eſtabliſh their own, ſuch do thereby ſhew that they are no right Shepherds of the true Chriſtians, but rather Wolves, *Caines*, *Iſmaelites*, and *Eſauhites*, whoſe hand is againſt all, and every mans hand againſt them.

The Kingdom of Chriſt (which is otherwiſe called the Chriſtian Church, ſaid a certain *Writer*) hath no earthly King, no Temporal Magiſtrate nor Governour, for the Lord alone is King in his Kingdom; as he is Ordained to be the Head of the Church, ſo he hath committed that to none to Govern.

This King governeth with the word of his Grace, the Soul and Conſcience; here are none compelled, for there is a Spiritual Freedom and willingneſs, there is no Violence or contention; which was held forth by the Figure of *Solomon's* Temple, where no Hammar, no Axe, or Iron inſtrument was to be heard, but there's Love and Unity, Peace and Mercy among all his Children.

That is certain (ſaid one) that all Religion is vain without true Godlineſs, and it is little matter of what Opinion any man be in different points of Religion, while he leadeth an ungodly life, and through that Doctaine which he profeſſeth is not bettered, but bittered againſt his fellow Chriſtian, and hateth, judgeth, and perſecuteth him, as it often happeneth among them that ſeem to be Religious.

The *States of Holland*, have confeſſed that the point of Religion in the Government of a Land, was of great concernment; And further they ſaid, that they abominated *forcing of Conſcience*, otherwiſe then with good Doctrine, good works, and intreaties.

A certain *Turkiſh* Ambaſſadour, complained to the King *Emmanuel* of *Portugal*, of the King of *Spain*, for his compelling by

by Violence the *Moores* in his Dominion to the Christian Faith or Religion, saying, it was not lawful neither for the Christians, nor yet for the *Mahomets* to compel any man so, as that he should forsake that Religion in which he had been Educated; And that he could not be silent to see such things, to the injury and desolation of People in the general, but must testifie that it was to the prejudice of Mankind, and to the disadvantage of Religion, *&c.*

Osorius declared, That it was neither according to the Law, nor according to Religion, to compel the *Jewes* and *Moores* to the Faith; And that none ought to determine to restrain the free mind, for he affirmed, it was not the Will of Christ, neither ought such things to be.

Anno 1455. The *Turk* wrote a Letter to the Pope *Calixtus* the third, wherein he acknowledged, that *Jesus Christ* had been a great Prophet, yet (said he) he hath not commanded that any should compel People by Violence and Weapons, to believe his Law.

Haywardus said, That the best Writers of that time did agree in one Opinion, and with *Tertulliano*, *Lactantio*, *Cassiodoro*, *Josepho*, &c. That People must inform men to imbrace Religion with reason, and not compel them by Violence.

I have for a long season determined (said one of the Kings of *France*) to reform the Church, which without Peace (said he) I cannot do, and it is impossible to reform or convert People by Violence.

I am King as a Shepherd (said he) and will not shed the blood of my Sheep, but will gather them through the mildness and goodness of a King, and not through the Power of Tyranny; And I will give them of the Reformed Religion, right Liberty to live and dwell free, without being examined, perplexed, molested, or compelled to any thing contrary to their Conscience; for they shall have the free exercise of their Religion, *&c. Vide Chron. Vande Onderg. 2. Deel. Page* 1514.

And as concerning the planting, nourishing, and defending of the Christian Religion, that is said to be the office and work of upright and sincere Teachers; further (saith he) it concerns the

the Magiſtrate to defend and protect the Innocent and harmleſs People, who are Perſecuted, Robbed, Priſoned, and Tyrannically uſed.

Experience hath ſufficiently manifeſted, both in *France*, *Germany*, *Bohemia*, and in the *Low-Countries*, and elſewhere, that to make War about Religion, or thereby to eſtabliſh and defend it, is an abſolute perverſe and deſtructive means, and that which is totally againſt the true Chriſtian Religion: yet notwithſtanding ſome cry up *Weapons*, *Weapons*, but alas have we not ſeen, that *Weapons* are ſtirred up againſt *Weapons*? And what is this reconciling ſlaughter, with ſlaughter, and blood with blood, but the manner and cuſtome of the Heathen?

CHAP. II.

Concerning the true and falſe Church, the Goſpel and Religion: As alſo ſhewing the inſufficiency of carnal Weapons in Spiritual Matters.

THE Church that is diſperſed through the World, hath the name of Chriſt her Head, and is ſtrengthened not with reſiſting, but with Suffering and Patience; for the Goſpel in the Primitive Church, was not Preached with Swords and an Armed hand, but with Exhortation and Perſwaſion, *Hiſt. Eccl. lib. 4 Chap. 26.*

Barnardus ſaid, The Church muſt not perſecute as Wolves, but be Perſecuted, like as the Sheep are of the Wolves; And in this Calamity of the World, they ſtand as Palm-trees through the Power of God, and grow and increaſe; ſo that ſome have eſteemed *Sanguis Martirum eſt ſemen Eccleſiæ*, (i. e.) the blood of the Martyrs to be the ſeed of the Church; for (ſaid he) as one was put to death, there came ten in his ſtead.

Luther ſaid, That the hypocrites Church was to be known by its manners, whoſe Image and figure was *Eſau*, yet ſhe boaſted of God, and would be accounted his Church, but lived wholly according to the World.

Further (ſaid he) the true Church is not defended by a fleſhly

Arm,

Arm, which wicked Biſhops eſpecially uſe and cry unto, *Thaſan. Pag.* 622.

As heretofore, he that was born after the fleſh, Perſecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even ſo is it now, &c. Conſider theſe words of *Paul* (ſaid *Caſtellio*) *Iſhmael* that was born after the fleſh, Perſecuted *Iſaac* who was born after the Spirit; even ſo now do the fleſhly Perſecute the Spiritual; But *Abell* did not Perſecure *Cain*, nor *Lot* the *Sodomites*, nor *David Saul*, nor the true Prophets the falſe, nor *Chriſt and his Apoſtles* the *Scribes and Phareſees*, although ſome of them might have done it, yet nevertheleſs they did it not.

So is it at this day, though the number of the Righteous be but ſmal, who are Perſecuted of the wicked, yet ſometimes they might injury their Perſecutors, but they are ſo far from doing that, that they are rather helpful to them, and do ſeek their Salvation.

The falſe Church is grounded more upon men then upon Chriſt, and ſhe Perſecuteth thoſe that live Righteouſly according to the Word of God, and ſuch as reprove her for her failings.

Damaſcenus ſaid, that the Goſpel had been Preached in all the World, but did not conquer its oppoſers with Weapons, Arms, or Fighting, but a few unlearned, confounded the Wiſe ones of the World.

Oh (ſaid *Boudaert*) that the Biſhops were ſo well experienced in the Word of God, that they would rather with Reaſon ſeek to bring them that go aſtray to the right way, then to compell them by Corporal puniſhment to adhere unto their Elect.

It is impoſſible (ſaid *Luther*) that the Church of Chriſt ſhould be, or ſhould ſtand without bloodſheding, for the Devil who is an Enemy of God's Church, is alſo a Lyar and a Murtherer, yet the Church hath alwayes increaſed in blood, ſaid He; in the *Colloq.*

Sanguine mundata eſt Eccleſia, Sanguine cepit
Sanguine ſuccrevit, ſanguine finis erit.

Jan Monlin, the Biſhop of *Valence* affirmed, That it was an Error to moleſt the publick Peace with Weapons, under pretence of Religion; a thing (ſaith he) which hath been alwayes abhorred by the Antients.

For Wars and compulſary puniſhments, have never been the means to bring to Unity; For Wars and cruelty tend to the deſtroying both of Body and Soul, even of thoſe, who peradventure might otherwiſe have been gained through love and gentleneſs, for that counſel which tends to cruelty is worſe then the deſeaſe; yet notwithſtanding, it is the manner of ſuch Biſhops to plead for Weapons as have loſt the Spiritual Sword of *Peter*, and therefore (ſaid he) do they now make that Sword their Defence, which he drew againſt the ſervant of the High Prieſt. *Chron. vande Rel. uriih.* pag. 123, 124.

Anno 1579. *The States of Holland ſaid*, That this they obſerved, finding it by true experience, (viz.) *dat gewelt ende wapenen luttel helpen tot verbreijdinghe ende behoudeniſſe der Religien* (i. e.) That violence and Weapons availed little in ſpreading, and maintaining Religion; And further ſaid they, as we would not have that men ſhould do violence to our conſciences, neither will we do violence to the conſciences of others; for we are not to do that to another, which we would not have another to do unto us.

The Prince of Orange ſaid, We are not ſo unexperienced in the Doctrine of the Chriſtian Religion, as that we do not know, that all thoſe *tyes of Conſcience* wreathed or turned of men, are to no purpoſe to bind man before God: People ſhould not think it ſtrange, nor therefore take up Arms (ſaid he) becauſe that many of the Inhabitants of this Country are become of another opinion, and ſimply declare themſelves, yea againſt the Will of the Magiſtrates, which thing the Hiſtories do teſtifie not to be new, but that ſuch differences have been in the World in many *Monarchies* heretofore.

To the ſame purpoſe did the *States of Holland* teſtifie, (viz.) how that difference in doctrine was not ſtrange in the Church, but ſaid they, it is better rectified through forbearance, then through deviſion, *Inde Apolog.* 1581. *fol.* 15.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Concerning cruel Lawes againſt Hereticks, how the Biſhops and Clergy heretofore have been the cauſe of them; who are the cauſe of tumults; the neceſſity of juſt Liberty, and the good effect thereof.

IN the year 553. the *Pope Palagius* inſtituted firſt of all, That Hereticks and Apoſtates ſhould be *forced* by external compulſion, *&c. Clemens* the fifth made Lawes that Hereticks ſhould be burned; *Gerardus Naviomagus* ſheweth, how that the Laws for putting of Hereticks to death, came not by the free will of the Emperours, but through the earneſt importuning of blood-thirſty Biſhops, whoſe conſtant recourſe was a burthen to the Emperours, ſo that finally they obtained what they deſired; but when the Clergy could not prevail with one Emperour, they excluded him out of *Italy*, excommunicated him, brought him in ſuſpition, freed the Subjects from the Oath, and ſtirred them up againſt the Power; And thus have the Clergy handled when they could not have their wills.

And it might be plenteouſly manifeſted out of the Hiſtories, how that it hath been blood-thirſty Biſhops with others of the Clergy, that have provoked Kings, and the Potentates of the Earth to cruelty, and who have counſelled them to make bloody Lawes, like the Biſhop *Neſtorius*, who in his Sermon ſpoke unto the Emperour and ſaid, *O Emperour give me a Land cleanſed of Hereticks, and I will give thee Heaven; help me againſt the Hereticks, and I will help thee to ſubdue the Perſians thy Enemies*, &c. Yet it doth not appear that upright and ſincere Teachers have ſought the defence or help of the Emperours or Kings againſt Hereticks, but it is evident that baniſhing and perſecuting to death about Religion, came not from the example of the Righteous, but rather from the Heathen, and from *Arius*, *Neſtorius*, *Palagius*, and their Proſelytes.

There was a certain man that complained unto the Prince of

Orange, ſaying, That it was ſufficiently known, that ſince the dayes of the Apoſtles, that hurtful and noiſom Plague hath reigned and had the Dominion in the Church, (*viz.*) that the greateſt part of the Divines and Clergy, have aſſumed more Authority and Power to themſelves (yea and have taken it by force) then ever God the Father gave them; And the aforeſaid Prince obſerved, how they ſought to uſurp Authority over the Conſcience, and to bring People in ſubjection to their Lawes and Inſtitutions.

There are ſome Teachers (ſaid a certain wiſe man) that are exceeding cruel, angry, paſſionate, full of Covetouſneſs and Pride, who judge and reject all things but their own, and would have ſuch puniſhed and put to death as do not agree with them, and conform unto them; Another ſort there are that are Meek, Patient, Gentle and Humble, who bear all things, and hope all things, and will compel none to their Religion.

Braſſius ſaid, That they that have a right Evangelical Doctrine and Faith, perſecute none, but are perſecuted themſelves; 'tis true *Paul* ſaid, we ſhould *reject a Heretick after the firſt and ſecond Admonition*; but he ſaid not, that we ſhould Baniſh him out of the City or Country.

Conſider once, ſaid *Adrianus*, and ſee if the *Hereticks* have not alwayes perſecuted the Righteous; but where do you find that falſe Prophets and falſe Teachers have been perſecuted of the World, which doth alwayes love that which belongs to it, and vilifie, curſe, kill and murder that which Chriſt hath choſen; for that which he chuſeth is not of the World: And now is Chriſt and his Diſciples (ſaid he) eſteemed of the World as Hereticks, Seducers, Uprore-makers; and the Seducers, Hereticks, and they that riſe up againſt the Lord, and his Anointed, they are by the World called Chriſtians.

The true Chriſtians have been alwayes perſecuted of the World, not becauſe they have deſerved it, but becauſe they have not been conformable to their falſe Doctrines, falſe Sacraments, their Vanity and Superſtition.

It is the manner of the falſe Teachers (ſaid a certain writer) to cry out againſt thoſe that teach any thing contrary to them; for ſay they, *They make Tumults among the People*; and this with other

other things they charge upon those that reprove them, when they themselves are the most tumultuous; for if they did not stir up the Magistrates and People to Persecution and shedding of blood, there would not be such Tumults among the People.

Moreover the contention and Tumults that are among men, proceed not from them that serve God in the exercise of their Religion according to their Conscience, but from such as will not suffer that, but with Violence will usurp Authority over the Faith of others.

The Histories do testifie, how that the Mallady wherewith several Emperours, Kings, and Princes have been perplexed, could nor be cured, nor perfect Peace and Rest injoyed, nor true Obedience and Subjection maintained to Magistracy, except they gave Liberty of Conscience to their Subjects; wherefore some of them suffered themselves to be thereunto perswaded by their Subjects.

Anno 1601. In the Land of *Cleave*, there was a notable Reformation and Tolleration in Religion; For there it was decreed, that from henceforth, no man should be adjudged unfit for places of Office, for his different judgement in Religion, which did occasion much trust and Peace, and did free the People from all *Persecution* in Spiritual matters.

It hath been formerly said, that when a Prince cometh so far, that between two parties he defendeth one party with Weapons, and oppresseth the other with Weapons, that then he getteth the name of a Tyrant, and robbeth the Land of its welfare, and through his own Power weakeneth his own might, and maketh the same open for an Enemy. *Merck-tyck*: Page 57.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

The evil Effects of Forcing of the Conſcience; what it is; Their Folly ſhewn, that would have the Magiſtrates to Force People; How the Old Fathers and Antient Chriſtians heretofore have witneſſed againſt it; and what other Means they uſed.

THis do moſt Hiſtories teſtifie (*viz.*) That the Diſtractions, Uproars, and many more Inconveniences have been chiefly occaſioned through ſevere *Proclamations*, cruel Proceedings, and Perſecution about matters of Religion, and *Forcing of Conſcience*, which is plenteouſly to be found in ſeveral *Chronicles*; but eſpecially in the *Chronicles* of the overthrow of the Tyrants, Printed at *Hoorn*, in *North Holland*, Anno 1620.

Forcing of Conſcience is ſaid to be this (to wit) When any Compels Men to do any thing which is contrary to their Conſcience, or to abſtain from ſuch Exerciſes as they in Conſcience eſteem to be profitable and neceſſary to their Salvation; one of theſe two is that which is commonly called *forcing of Conſcience*, againſt which the Martyrs ſince the Dayes of the Apoſtles have teſtified, and have manifeſted it clearly to be an unfitting thing, as might be ſhewn at large out of *Hiſtories*, *Books of Martyrs*, *Apologies*, *Remonſtrations*, &c.

Maximillian the Emperor, told *Hendricus* the King of France, That there was no Sin ſo great (in his account) as to do Violence to the Conſcience; And that thoſe that went about to conquer the ſame, thinking to gain Heaven, did often loſe that they had upon Earth.

It is well known, that many are of Opinion, that it is very neceſſary that the Magiſtrate compel by *Force* and Violence the unwilling to the Faith, to the end that they may come of themſelves as they imagine: But ſaid *Eraſmus*, Moſt men are ſo diſpoſed, that they will rather be led then compelled, and that by Intreaties more may be obtained than through Cruelties.

Thoſe

Thoſe that are ignorant of the drawings of the Father (ſaid a Wiſe man) would have Magiſtrates to draw by violence; ſuch, as do not only remain Ignorant of the Drawings of the Father, but alſo others that are in the Truth, they would have drawn to their dead Inventions, as if they would conform ſo ſoon as they are puniſhed: But I ſuppoſe (ſaith he) that thoſe that would otherwiſe come of themſelves voluntarily, through Puniſhments are terrified away; As the Fiſh in the Water that come voluntarily to the Bait and Net, but when People would compel them, they fly. The truth of this, can *Geneva*, *Savoy*, and other Places witneſſe, ſaid the Author.

Chriſoſtomus ſaid, That in Heavenly matters, People muſt uſe no Violence; for ſaith he, Theſe that uſe Violence, eſtrange men moſt of all from their Religion; inſtancing an Example in *Weſt-India*, of the Spaniards Tormenting a *Caſique* or Lord, (ſo called) and one of the Clergy ſeeking by his Preaching to convert him to the Faith, told him of Heaven and Hell, &c. Then he asked the Clergy-man, Where he and the Spaniards ſhould be? he ſaid in Heaven; then ſaid the other, Let me continue in Hell, not being willing to be with ſuch cruel People: *Bartolomeus delas caſas Lactantius dixit, non eſt opus vi et injura quia Religio cogi non poteſt; verbis potius quam verberibus res agenda eſt, ut ſit voluntas. Nihil eſt enim tam voluntarium quam Religio, in quaſi animus ſacrificantis averſus eſt, jam ſublata, jam nulla eſt.*

Auguſtinus ſaid, He did not approve of the Emperors Compelling any by violence, contrary to their Conſcience; and he with *Chriſoſtomus*, together with ſeveral others of the Antient Writers, inferred from the 13th. of Matthew, that men ſhould do no Violence to Hereticks neither compel any to the free Faith, ſeeing God would have a willing unforced Heart. *Chron. van de urijh. der, Rel. 2. deel, pag. 17.*

There were ſome in a certain National Synod, that did much endeavour to ſtir up the civil Powers to compel all People by *Fines*, or other politick Puniſhments, to come to hear the Sermon; but others bare Teſtimony againſt ſuch politick Corrections,

Corrections, as to puniſh by Fines, Impriſonments, &c. which they eſteem unfitting to be introduced into the Church, being they were inconſiſtant with the Chriſtian Long-Suffering and Meekneſs, and for the which they had no Example neither in the Old nor New Teſtament, *Anno* 1619.

Calvin ſaid, That the Apoſtle gave to underſtand, that to exerciſe Authority over ones Faith, was in no wiſe juſt nor tolerable; yea, (ſaith he) it is Tyranny in the Church, for Faith ought to be free from all Subjection of men.

Though ſome are yet of that Opinion, that it is lawful for the Magiſtrates to compel People contrary to their Conſciences, by corporal Puniſhments, yea even to the Death, for to make them keep ſilent, or confeſs things contrary to their minds: Yet moſt of the Old Fathers have alledged, that it hath not been lawful for the Magiſtrates to touch the Conſcience, as to force it in matters of Religion. *Merck-teyck, Chap.* 4. 2 *Deel.* pag. 132.

The Antient Chriſtians did not approve of any External Compulſion, but only by Intreating, by good Living, with Exhortations, Doctrins, Informations and endeavours, they laboured to convince People, and through the Word of Truth, they ſought to bring People Captive ſo under the Obedience of Chriſt; and if the like means now do not prevail, then no humane invention through doing Violence will, for that will rather make them worſe, as heretofore it hath done.

The moſt Violence that can be done by man, cannot compel or change the vain infidelity of the mind; how ſhould that then poſſibly move or alter them, that are unmoveably eſtabliſhed in the Eternal Truth, who will not in any wiſe be brought to receive things that are damnable, nor to forſake that which they eſteem to be neceſſary to their Salvation.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

A Chancellours Teſtimony. Their Folly that would force Men, and the Fruits thereof. How Juſt Liberty would preſerve Unity. And how they that Force others, would not be forced.

THe Chancellour of *France* ſaid in the great Aſſembly of the three States before the King,

Firſt, That the abſurdity of the Romiſh Church was the Cauſe of Hereſie.

Secondly, That evil Remedies had ſtrengthened the ſame.

Thirdly, That the Weapons of Love, Prayer, and Information with the Word of God, were fit for ſuch a Battle.

Fourthly, That a good Life Preached more than Words.

Fifthly, That the Sword could do little againſt the Spirit, except it was to undoe both Body and Soul. *In the Comm. Fol.* 132.

Are they not carnal and violent Iſhmaelites (ſaid one) who would Violently *Force* rational Men (often to humane and damnable Opinions) as Horſes and Mules, and not with kindneſs intreat, and only inſtruct with the Truth, and invite to the needful ſpiritual knowledge of the Truth, and true Worſhip, as reaſonable and free men.

Humani juris et naturalis poteſtatis eſt unicuique, quod putaverit colere, nec alij prodeſt aut obeſt alterius Religio; ſed nec Religionis eſt cogere Religionem que ſponte non vi ſuſcipi debeat.

Eraſmus ſaid, the Divines not relying upon that Power wherewith they ought to be Armed, they make Violence their Refuge, as if men might be compelled to believe otherwiſe than their Opinion.

When ſeveral of the Prieſts in the Low-Country, Requeſted of the *Prince* and *States*, that they would introduce *Ordinances* and *Diſciplin* according to their Opinions; but the Prince and the States rejected their Requeſts, eſteeming them prejuditial both to Religion and Policy, when they obſerved the

divers Opinions that were among the People, concluding it was the beſt (as many Politicians have done) to preſerve Unity among the People, to give Liberty to all, and to compel none, *Anno* 1608. *Edict. Fol.* 27.

It hath alſo been the judgement of many, That *Forcing of Conſcience* hath made many *Hipocrites*, but no true Servants of God: Therefore ought men to ſtrive with the Word and Diſputation, and to conquer with Reaſon, ſaid *Auguſtinus*, leaſt that we make them Hypocritically *Catholicks*, whom before we have known to be manifeſt *Hereticks*. *Anno* 1200.

The *Chronicles* do ſhew, how that they that are, and have been but ſeemingly Religious, do commonly joyn themſelves to that Religion or *Sect* which is the uppermoſt, whereby they may live in Eaſe, Honour and Fulneſs, and get profit and preferment, through Places and Offices; inſtancing how that in *England*, there were them in the Dayes of *King Hendrick* and *Edward*, that ſhewed themſelves to be Proteſtants; and in the Dayes of *Queen Mary* Papiſts, and Perſecuted others to Death, and afterwards in the dayes of *Queen Elizabeth*, got again in the lap of the Proteſtant Church, and then perſecuted the Papiſts; *vide* the ſecond part of the *Chronicle* of the overthrow of Tyrants, *pag.* 1502.

Arenmius affirmed, That all *Forcing of Conſcience*, though it was but a forbidding of the Exerciſe which is eſteemed by one or another to be neceſſary to Salvation, was in no wiſe right nor fitting: He alſo affirmed, That through Diverſities of Religions, the Kingdom ſhould not be brought into any Diſturbance.

The Antient Reformed Proteſtants, termed that *Forcing of Conſcience*, when they were conſtrained to leave off the exerciſe of their Religion, ſaying, *Car nous privant de noſtre Religion, on nous tiendroit en une continuele mort corporelle & ſpirituelle.* (i. e.) For to deprive us of our Religion, is to keep us in a perpetual corporal and ſpiritual Death. Adding thereunto, how that they would rather be put to Death, than be bereaved of the exerciſe of their Religion, &c.

Many have teſtified, and many do teſtifie, that *Forcing of Conſcience* is a wicked deſtructive means, both for Soul and Body,

dy, againſt which the Martyrs that have ſuffered have univerſally born Teſtimony.

Now (ſaid a certain Wiſe Man) Let theſe conſider, who do ſo much ſtir up the Powers of the Earth to *Force* free minds againſt their conſciences, whether they would be forced by violence againſt their conſcience, to imbrace the Popes Faith of *Rome*, with all its Superſtitions, or that which is worſe, and that upon pain of death: Let ſuch then judge (ſaid he) how hard it is to be *Forced* againſt ones conſcience to any Form of Worſhip, which is not in the Spirit and Truth, &c.

If any durſt ſpeak freely what he beleiveth, and thinketh in his heart (ſaith *Caſtellio*) he ſhould ſay that he thinketh, and believeth that ſuch *Forcers* are abſolute Tyrants; and that whereunto they preſs him is not good: And if formerly he had any inclination thereunto, that he through ſuch violence cometh wholly to abhor it.

The Antient Proteſtants teſtified, that that Religion which was defended with cruelty, was not grounded upon the Word of God.

CHAP. VI.

A ſhift of the Popes; a humane invention; how the Spiritual Kingdome, and true Church, ſubſiſteth and is Defended by Spiritual Weapons; and how Perſecution anſwereth not the end of Perſecutors.

THE Hiſtory ſheweth, how that this is one of the Popes *Maxim's*, (viz.) that when he ſees the Spiritual Weapons are not ſufficient for him, then doth he fly unto the carnal, therewith to help himſelf: *Int Duitſe*, 244.

And others have been and are of that opinion, That Religion could not be preſerved without the Magiſtrates Sword, therefore underſtood they, that they were to be cryed unto for help, as many do now.

But *Irenæus Philaletius* ſaid, That this was but a humane invention of the Natural underſtanding, which would gladly

change the Nature of the Church of Christ; but it is in vain said he.

The *States of Holland* said, That the true Ministers of Christ, who did perfectly trust in the Lord, had no External Sword, nither did they call unto any civill Power for Protection; but they used the Sword of the Spirit, which is the living Word of God, with which they defended the Church, &c. *vide urede Handel van Colen*, Pag. 198.

Barnardus said, That the Kindome of Christ was Spiritul, and as it was builded by Spiritual Vertues, so was it spread, preserved, and established with Spiritual Weapons; for its Enemies were and are Spiritual, *Eph.* 6.11. & 2.2.

Lactantius said, If you will with blood, with evil, and with torments defend the Worship, it shall not thereby be defended, but polluted, *Lib.*5.*Chap.*20.

The Apostles had not the assistance of Emperours, Kings, Princes, nor Lords; but had even the whole World against them, (said a certain Wise Man) wherefore how can this stirring up, and instigating of Magistrates be Evangelical, or according to the Gospel? Or how can this work of tumultuous Teachers, bring honour to Gods Word and his Truth? Who hath heretofore defended the Church of Christ, was it defended by *Pilate*? Or was the Church of the Apostles no Church? What *coercive* Power or outward Protection had they? Or what external Power, or outward defence had their Church in the Beginning? And cannot the true Church now subsist, with that which she had in the Begining?

And it is evident, that many who have suffered much Persecution for the exercise of their conscience, have been thereby strengthened, and have therein multiplyed; therefore it is apparent, that the fruit of Persecuting to death in matters of Religion, is wholly contrary to the determination of Persecutors.

Castellius said, That *Paul* strove with Spiritual Weapons, and thereby overcame hundreds; but we (alas said he) are together by hundreds to put to death one single man, and appear for Christ with fleshly Weapons, to the end that People might understand

derſtand, that we are ſtripped of the Spiritual Weapons, and will have a fleſhly Chriſt.

But ſeeing the Apoſtles, who Planted the Church were ſatisfied with their Spiritual Weapons; it is then evident, that they who make uſe of carnal Weapons, confide not ſufficiently in the Spiritual, which they would confide in no doubt if they had them, ſeeing they are alſufficient, as ſhall appear at the coming of the Lord; who will conquer Antichriſt his greateſt Enemy, with no other Weapon, then with the Sword of his Mouth.

Conſtantinus the Emperour ſaid, That it was enough that he preſerved the unity of the Faith, that he might be excuſable before the judgement Seat of God, and that he would leave every one to his own underſtanding, according to the account he will give before the judgement Seat of Chriſt; hereto may we ſtir up People (ſaid he) not compel them, beſeech them to come into the unity of the Chriſtians; but to do violence to them, we will not in no wiſe.

[*Nota*] Herein was *Conſtantinus* much commended, becauſe that he tollerated every one to believe, and to ſerve God as he was perſwaded in his own heart, eſteeming his gentleneſs and mercy more available, then ſevere *Proclamations*; and in this particular he was not deceived, *Sabaſt. Frank. Chron. fol.* 127.

The Chriſtian Religion (ſaid the States of *Holland*) is a great Miſtery, for the furtherance of which God doth not make uſe of wicked Souldiers, nor of Bow, nor of Sword, but his Spirit, and the Shepherds that are ſent by him; further they ſaid it was not their intention to compell any to their Religion, &c.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

How the Inquisitioners and Clergy have stirred up the Powers to Persecute; and what fair pretences Persecutors have had; how dangerous it is to root out the Tares before the time; and wherein the Ancient Protestants have been more Noble than the Clergy now.

IT is a common thing with many, to accuse those with troubling of the Churches peace, and with disturbing of the publick peace, (said a certain wise Man) who teach otherwise than the Church, or who speak any thing against the Clergy, or dispute with any of their restless Priests, or hold their Meetings apart, though it be in all civility and stilness.

In like manner hath the Inquisitioners and the Clergy (said he) stirred up the Emperour, the King of *Spain* and of *France*, to terrible Persecution, laying it upon their consciences to quit themselves severely against the Hereticks, if they would escape the Lords reproof, though most of their Subjects and Land should perish. And when the Clergy had prevailed with them, then they declared in their Proclamations and Edicts, That their intent was onely the Glory of God, and the Salvation of the Hereticks Souls, and to prevent the peoples being drawn to any cursed Error or Sect, but that they should continue in subjection, and in the old observations of the Mother, the H. Church, and H. Christians Faith and Sacraments, as appears from their Proclamations, *Anno* 1538, 1546, 1560, 1564.

Erasmus said, How that sometime it cometh to passe, that those who with more fury, then with good understanding carry on matters, do sometime not only root out the Wheat with the Tares (which Christ hath forbidden) but also in place of rooting out the Tares do root out the Wheat; seeing they Judge before they have understanding, or will make that odious, which is well spoken by perverting of it; And they will have that to be a Zeal for Religion, and a detesting of Heresie, when it is the

the onely destroying of Godlineſs and Unity. *Chron. van de Rel. wijh. 2 Deel*, pag. 33.

Auguſtinus ſaid, Some diſturbed the peace of the Church, while they went about to root out the Tares before the time; and through this Error of blindneſs (ſaid he) are they themſelves ſeperated ſo much the more from being united unto Chriſt.

Retnaldus teſtified, That he who with Impriſoning and Perſecuting ſeeketh to ſpread the Goſpel, and greaſeth his hands with blood, ſhall much rather be looked upon for a wild Hunter, then a Preacher, or a Defender of the Chriſtian Religion.

Eraſmus ſaid, That the World had common Lawes for to puniſh offenders; but the Chriſtian meekneſſe muſt rather uſe diligence to reform men, then to judge them.

In the begining of Reformation (ſaith the Chron.) the Church gloried of the Truths Weapons, and deſired that thoſe that had any thing to ſay concerning their Doctrine, ſhould freely reprove them, and they would defend the ſame with the holy Scripture; Exhorting people in their Pulpits, and freely proffering to confer or Diſpute with any, and every one had then freedome.

But now will not the Clergy (ſaid the ſame Author) be ſpoken againſt, who ſit at eaſe in Pride, Idleneſs, and Fulneſs; and if any do ſpeak againſt them, they will ſo much as in them lie, cauſe ſuch to ſuffer, charging them with breaking the Peace of the Church, or the Peace of the Kingdome; and with rayling words, will evade entering into a ſober diſcourſe, thereby manifeſting the badneſs of their Cauſe, and the guiltineſs of their Conſcience; and then ſeek to defend themſelves more by the Power of the Magiſtrate, then with Gods Word and Godly teſtimony; and in the mean time prejudice others, by procuring their own reſt and peace; but ſurely this is neither juſt, right, nor equal.

Further (ſaith he) in the mean time thoſe men would have a triumphant Church upon the Earth, but no ſuffering; neither will they ſuffer any trouble, difficulty, or oppoſition, but do make the Magiſtrate believe, that ſuch things incurr trouble,

Uproar,

Uproar, Diſturbance, &c. Yet nevertheleſs ſome of the Clergy themſelves have put forth ſundry Treatiſes, wherein they ſhewed how that the Peace and Welfare of the Land might be preſerved, though ſeveral Religions in the Land were tollerated.

Quand à la permiſſion de S'aſſembler es Temples, Sire, aucune diviſion & tumulte ne'n adviendra entre vous Subjects, mais bien un repos public & extinction de toute Sedition Populaire.

As touching the permitting the aſſembling together in Temples, no manner of Diviſion or Tumult can from hence ariſe among your Subjects, but rather a Publick reſt and extinguiſhing of all Popular Sedition.

For the *Chronicle* alſo ſheweth, how that the diſturbance and trouble cometh not through thoſe that live orderly according to their Conſcience and the word of God, and accordingly exerciſe their Religion in Stilneſs, but through thoſe who will not ſuffer this, nor bear others, but ſeek to have the Preheminence, and to exerciſe Lordſhip over others, and therefore do they raiſe up Perſecution.

But the *States of Holland* teſtified, *Dat waer vervolginghen Zijn, datter daer al in roere is, maer waer geen en ſijn al ſijnder verſcheijden Religien, dat daer alle ſaelren ſtilder ſijn, ſo oolr in onſe wijden is bevonden*, (*i. e.*) That where there was Perſecution, there was all in diſtraction; but where there was none (though there were ſeveral Religions) there all things were the quieter; as have been evident in our dayes, ſaid they. *Vide urede Handel van Coln. fol.* 53.

CHAP. VIII.

Concerning obedience to Magiſtrates; the vanity and evil of forcing of Conſcience; Certain Mixims aſſerted by many wiſe men, how Violence becometh not the Miniſters of the Goſpel, neither hath Chriſt nor his Apoſtles taught it, nor practiſed it.

CAlvin ſaid, That thoſe that are ſet over us muſt be obeyed, if that the command of God be not thereby diſobeyed

diſobeyed, but if they lead us from Obedience to God, and preſumptuouſly ſtrive againſt the Lord, then muſt they not be regarded (ſaid he) to the end that God with his Authority may retain the Preheminence.

The *States of Holland*, teſtified, That Subjects were not obliged in all things, whether right or unright, to be ſubject to their *Princes. Int plac. Anno* 1581. 2. *Deel. fol.* 12.

Prince of *Orange* being commanded by the King, when he departed out of *Zealand*, to put many ſober People to death, who were ſuſpected concerning their Religion, but therein he would not obey the King, knowing he could not do it with a good Conſcience, and alſo being aſſured, *that it was better to obey God than man.*

Moreover (ſaid a certain Writer) the truth with ſad experience hath learned us, and plainly ſhewn us, That *forcing of Conſcience* and Perſecuting about Religion is not onely in vain, but a direct contrary means, and a cauſe of Sects and diſturbances, and of many evils, as the *Chroncles of Germany*, *France* and the *Low Countryes*, do abundantly teſtifie.

The States of *Holland* alſo affirmed, That it was not poſſible to find out means of any good and certain Peace, otherwiſe then by Tollerating more then one Religion.

Experientia ſatis edocti ſumus, ferrum, flammas, exilium, proſcriptiones, irritaſſe potius, quam ſanaſſe morbum menti inhærentem.

The King of *France* was moved with great Zeal (ſaid a certain Biſhop) to ordain great Torment and puniſhment for the Hereticks, thinking thereby to root out their Opinion, and to Unite the People together in one Opinion; but in his determination (ſaith he) he was deceived; So was alſo *Duke d'Alba*, who for five or ſix years together, endeavoured with exceeding great Tyranny, to maintain the Law of the King in the Low-Countryes. *In Het.* 36. *van de ſtandt der Rel. fol.* 190.

Now notwithſtanding the great Perſecution that is and hath been about Religion, theſe following *Maximes* are aſſerted and owned by moſt men;

1. *That Faith is the gift of God.*
2. *That Relgion ought to be free.*

3. *That*

3. *That no Religion by Violence can be imprinted in the Heart.*

4. *That Forcing maketh men Hypocrites.*

5. *That it is impoſſible to preſerve the Land in Peace, without giving Liberty for the free exerciſe of Religion.*

6. *That in one Land or City, there may be well more Religions than one.*

7. *That it is a ſeed of Contention and Uproar among the People, when men contrary to Promiſe, and to what they ought, reſiſt one another in their Religion.*

8. *And that prohibiting the free exerciſe of Religion, tendeth openly or manifeſtly to the deſtruction of men, which happeneth, when one party with Violence ſeeketh to root out anothers Religion.*

Nevertheleſs (ſaid the Author) it is evident, that many fooliſh Zealots will obſtinatly run on in that deſtructive path of forcing Conſcience, and thereby bereave others of the Exerciſe of their *Religion*.

Fredericus the King of *Bohemia* ſaid, That in theſe laſt times there were many different Opinions riſen among men in matters of *Faith* and *Religion*, but according to what is contained in the Scripture, and according to the ſetled Foundation of Doctrine (ſaid he) men will not be urged, compelled or forced in their Conſcience; for when ſuch *forcing* hath been attempted, it hath had an evil end; and in the chiefeſt Kingdoms and Provinces, there hath been a remarkable change made; for through this means, Cities come to be more ruined than benefitted. *Vide* his Declaration Printed in the *Hague*, *Anno* 1619.

It doth in no wiſe become the Preachers of the Goſpel, and Miniſters of the New-Teſtament, to deal in Matters of Faith by Force, Violence and Tyranny (ſaid a wiſe Man) or thereunto to help, Counſel, or Adviſe; but with Prayer, with the Word of God, and with the Sword of the Spirit.

Lambertus teſtified, ſaying, Truly things are not well, neither do men right, when they go about to remove *Heretick*s and Errors with Weapons; for the Truth and certainty of the Chriſtian Doctrin, ought not to depend upon the uncertain Effects of War: Therefore hath neither Chriſt himſelf nor his Apoſtles, taught men to take up Armes againſt them that were reprobated from the Faith, as if that were an external means for to rout out Errors, for the receiving or ſpreading of Religion.

gion, which is through fear of Weapons, is more like unto *Mahometiſme*, than unto the Chriſtian Religion.

Stephanus the King of *Poland* ſaid, Our deſire is, that all the Cities and Inhabitants did praiſe one God unanimouſly; but it hath been declared, that in the latter Dayes Offences ſhall come; therefore will not we compel any to believe (ſaid he) but will keep Peace and concord among the Contentious, that contend about Religion, and defend every one in his Religion. *Chronicle* of the Tyrants, ſecond P. pag. 1326.

CHAP. IX.

How Judas Proſelytes now do follow his footſteps; How Confuſion and Uproar is not occaſioned in a Land through a juſt Toleration, but rather through want of it; And how none ought to be Baniſhed about Religion.

THe Hiſtories ſheweth, how that ſome of the Clergy hath ſaid, That the Princes ought to kiſs the Son, and to uſe their Power for to preſerve and defend Religion againſt all her Enemies, though their Lands ſhould therefore be ſpoyled: But the Son of God hath never taught any man ſo to kiſs him, though he was ſo unkindly kiſſed of *Judas*, as many Betrayers do yet in his Members; yet notwithſtanding Chriſt nor his Apoſtles did not ſeek to deliver *Judas* over to the Magiſtrates, but *Judas* ſought to deliver Chriſt over to them: And ſo do *Judas* Children at this day, deliver the true Chriſtians (whom they falſly call Hereticks) into the Hands of the Earthly Powers.

And though ſome ſay, That People of different Opinions, cannot live together in a Kingdom without continual contention; and therefore ſay they, muſt that be prevented with Fire and Sword. But what though there be vertue and filthineſs in a Kingdom, good and bad men, which are one contrary to the other, one muſt not therefore (ſaid a wiſe Man) to prevent it, bring a whole Kingdom or Land into Confuſion, by ſtirring up the People one againſt another.

Again, the true Church (ſaid he) hath never helped her ſelf with Perſecution, neither doth ſhe uſe any other Sword than God's Word, which ſhe having and keeping the Commands of God, prepareth her ſelf for to bear the Croſs, and to Suffer Perſecution, but not to bring Suffering upon others.

Moreover it is evident, That in *Dutchland*, *Poland*, and in the *Low-Countryes*, more Religions than one are Suffered, and yet there are not continual Uproars and Tumults, as ſome imagine ſuch Toleration would occaſion in a Kingdom; therefore may we conclude, that it is not the Toleration of more Religions than one, which produceth Uproar in a Kingdom, but rather the untowardneſs and perverſeneſs of them that ſeek to obſtruct this Toleration.

Camerarius ſaid, That it was groundleſs and irrational to ſay, that Diverſities of Opinions in matters of Religion do diſturb the Polity; but on the contrary, the Polity is diſturbed, when any man with the Liberty of his Opinion is not contented, but will moleſt and trouble others.

But ſome ſay, That every one in matters of Faith, are bound to obey the Magiſtrates under whom they live, and to follow them, and that they are worthy of Puniſhment who do it not.

But let ſuch know (ſaith the Author) that they do not only hereby condemn the firſt Reformed Proteſtants, but alſo the true Prophets and Apoſtles, yea, Chriſt himſelf, and all the Martyrs, and ſo juſtifie their Perſecutors and Murderers; if not, then may not the Magiſtrates now, oppreſs a Church, or a Religion, as many of the diſorderly Clergy would gladly ſee (ſaid he) and make the Magiſtrates believe.

And it is to be obſerved, how that among the Jews there were many Sects, as the *Phariſees*, *Eſſeans*, *Galileans*, *Saduces*, *Samaritans*, &c. who retained many unwholſome Opinions, yet they were not ſo Perſecuted, as now the falſe Chriſtians do Perſecute one another.

The Hiſtory ſheweth, how that it hath been ſufficiently proved, That none ought to Baniſh any about Religion that payed Tribute; yea, that the peaceable Jews and Heathen ought not to be Baniſhed out of the Land where they were born; for that which

which they have, they poſſeſs through that right which is common to all Nations; and to baniſh People, is ſaid to be directly contrary to the Law of Nature, and to the Commands of Love; for Kings and Princes ſo well as others, *Ought to do unto others as they would have others to do unto them*, And if they would not be Baniſhed out of their Dominions, then ſhould not they Baniſh others; and Innocency becometh them as well as others, who ought to do Evil to no man.

Les Princes qui ſe ſont Gouvernez par douceur & clemence conjointe a Juſtice, & qui ont uſe de moderation & debonnairete en vers leurs ſubjets ont tousjours grandement proſperè & longuement regne. Mais au contraire, les Princes cruels, iniques, perfides & oppreſſeurs de leurs ſubjets, ſont incontinent tombez eux & leur eſtat en peril ou en totale ruine, &c. par. N. M. *Anno* 1576.

Thoſe Princes that have ruled by Gentleneſs and Clemency added to Juſtice, and have exerciſed Moderation and Meekneſs towards their Subjects alwayes, greatly proſpered and Reigned long.

But on the contrary, thoſe Princes that have been Cruel, Unjuſt, Perfidious and Oppreſſors of their Subjects, have ſoon faln, they and their Eſtate into danger, or total Ruin, *N. M.* 1576.

CHAP. X.

The Severity of a Popiſh Synode; The Diſpoſition of the right Chriſtians; How Hereſie is not ſlain through the Death of Hereticks; and the evil conſequence of the Laws, which tend to the putting of Hereticks to Death.

IN a General Synod holden at *Rome*, it was forbidden men to hold any Fellowſhip with thoſe they termed Enemies of Religion, neither were they in any thing to aſſiſt them, which might tend to the preſerving of their Life, and great things were promiſed them that perſecuted ſuch, and inflicted puniſhment to the utmoſt upon them. *Vide Merula*, pag. 772.

But the true Chriſtians Perſecute no man about Religion,

Socrat.

Socrat. lib. 4. chap. 3. For the right Chriſtians did alwayes deal mercifully with them that were Hereticks indeed, and not Tyrannically by ſhedding of their Blood; but Hereticks and Infidels have been alwayes cruel towards the Chriſtians, with Perſecuting of them to Death.

When men with the Truth (ſaid one) ſlayeth the lies of Hereticks, then their Bodies remain alive, and their Souls come to be cured; but when men put Hereticks to death, they do not ſlay the *Hereſie*, but rather both Body and Soul.

Veritus ſaid, Seeing Chriſt is a Lamb, whom you profeſs to be your Head and Captain, then it behoveth you to be Sheep, and to uſe the ſame Weapons which he made uſe of, for he will not be a Shepherd of Wolves, and Wild Beaſts, but only of Sheep; wherefore if you loſe the nature of Sheep (ſaid he) and be changed into Wolves or Wild Beaſts, and uſe fleſhly Weapons, then will you exclude your ſelves out of his calling, and forſake his Banner, and then will he not be your Captain.

Often doth *Chriſoſtomus* ſhew, how that the true Chriſtians may not put any Heretick to Death, nor with Violence *Force* him to the Faith; manifeſting how it is againſt the Scripture, Reaſon and Equity, that People ſhould put men to Death becauſe of their Opinion or Ignorance, who otherwiſe are of a good Life and Converſation.

Aug. *Diligite homines, interficite Errores, ſine ſevitia pro veritate certate.*

Where haſt thou ever read in thy dayes (ſaid *Menno*) in the Writings of the Apoſtles, that Chriſt or the Apoſtles ever cryed out to the Magiſtrates for their Power, againſt them that would not hear their Doctrin, nor obey their Words? I know certainly ſaid he, that where the Magiſtrate ſhall baniſh with the Sword, there is not the right Knowledge, Spiritual Word, nor Church of Chriſt; 'tis *Invocare brachium ſeculare.*

It is not Chriſtian-like but Tyrannical, ſaid D. *Philipſen*, to Baniſh and Perſecute People about Faith and Religion, and they that ſo do, are certainly of the Phariſaical Generation to whom *Stephen* ſaid, *you ſtiff-necked and uncircumciſed in heart and ears, you do alwayes reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt*, Acts 7. 51, 52.

When a King or a Prince giveth forth a Law, by virtue of which

which Murderers are to be put to Death, then all the People that own and obey this Law, will do their beſt in helping to put them Death, whom they know aſſuredly to be Murderers; even ſo (ſaid a certain Writer) when the Biſhops, Presbyters, or any other writeth or publiſheth, that People ought to put Hereticks to Death, then muſt it needs follow (ſaid he) that the Papiſts ſhall do their beſt to put the Proteſtants to Death, and the Proteſtants the Papiſts, the Epiſcopal men the Presbyterians, and the Presbyterians the Epiſcopal men; for every Sect ſuppoſeth themſelves to be the right Believers, and the reſt they eſteem to be Hereticks; and then ſhould *Mannaſſeh* with *Ephraim*, and *Ephraim* with *Mannaſſeh*, riſe up againſt the Jews, yet ſhould not the Wrath of the Lord be appeaſed.

Caſtellius teſtified, how that ſome of the Divines (ſo called) when they medled with Hereticks, they judged them all to be Apoſtates, falſe Prophets, and Blaſphemers, to the end, that thereby they might the more vilifie and oppreſſe thoſe that differed from them; which (ſaith he) hath been the manner of all Scribes and Phariſees.

But who can produce a Law out of the holy Scripture, that requires Hereticks to be put to Death? 'tis true (ſaid he) there are Laws againſt Blaſphemers; but what is this to the purpoſe, except it can be proved that Hereticks are Blaſphemers? for who will believe that all theſe who at this day are cried Hereticks, are Blaſphemers and ungodly Men? who are ſo fooliſh as to believe the *Pope* (who judgeth the Proteſtants to be Blaſphemers, becauſe they differ from him in point of the Sacrament) that they therefore are Blaſphemers? and that the Baptiſts are Blaſphemers, becauſe they differ from him in their Baptiſm.

Acontius ſaid, It cannot be that a Heretick ſhould reject his Errour when he will, except that ſome reaſon conſtrain him thereunto; Wherefore then ſaid he, do you trouble ſuch a miſerable man, for to make him Lie, and to provoke him more and more to Sin againſt the Lord? ſurely men cannot deny but that it is an Invention of Satan (ſaid he) for to *Force* the Servants of God to deny Chriſt for fear of Puniſhment? Further (ſaid he) people muſt ſeek to conquer ſuch men, not through Threatnings,

but

but it muſt be through the Power of certain Teſtimonies and living Manifeſtations.

CHAP. XI.

The Popes Counſel and Intreaty; The ſad Effects of cruel Proclamations; How Inconſiſtant it is with the Life of Chriſt to Perſecute; Under what pretence the true Believers have Suffered; And how Perſecution cannot effect the thing for which it is intended.

HEreſie is a Greek Word, and ſignifieth a Sect or an Opinion, and they that did ſtiff-neckedly cleave unto evil Sects were called by the Greeks Αἱρετικοὶ, by the Latines *Pertinaces*, and by us are they called *Hereticks*. Now it is an eaſie matter to accuſe a man of being a *Heretick*, and of retaining Opinions contrary to his Conſcience; but it is a difficult thing, ſufficiently to prove and manifeſt the ſame; for all the Martyrs that have Suffered for the name of Chriſt, have been accuſed with being *Hereticks*, even as the Innocent Lamb's of Chriſt that Suffer now for his Names ſake, are accuſed at this day.

Pope Paul the third, counſelled and intreated the *Emperour Charles*, and King *Ferdinandus*, to compel the Proteſtants to forſake their Error. *Anno* 1545.

There can be no greater Suffering and Sorrow (ſaid a certain wiſe Man) brought upon ſuch as fear the Lord, than there may by compelling them through Puniſhment, to do that which is againſt their Conſcience, or to leave off ſuch an Exerciſe as they are perſwaded in their Conſcience is neceſſary to their Salvation.

The Hiſtory do ſhew, how that in the Low-Countries, there were betwixt *eighteen* and *nineteen thouſand* Men put to Death, upon their reſiſting of the Inquiſition, being brought into thoſe Parts.

Moreover, the *Chronicle* teſtifieth, That in the Dayes of *Charles* the Emperor, there were above *fifty thouſand* Men put to Death by Proclamations; ſome Proclamations did forbid upon

upon pain of Death, Peoples holding any Fellowſhip with them that fled, or were Baniſhed about Religion, or of aſſiſting them with Money or Proviſion; yea, one was Hanged (ſaith the *Chronicle*) becauſe he entertained his own Son, *Merck-tyck. pag. 77.*

Now, if any Emperor, King, Prince, or Superiours, ſhould through the Counſel of the Divines or Clergy, goe the ſame way that this Emperor *Charles* went with his Son King *Phillip*, who were Deſtroyed with their Land and People; who may not ſo truly, as certainly Propheſie and warn ſuch Powers, who wilfully take ſuch a Courſe (ſaid the Author) that they alſo will bring themſelves with their Land, Religion, and Subjects to Ruine?

M. Publ. Alienis malis cautior. Seneca, 21.

Some are, and have been of that Opinion, That there are no People that ought to be more ſeverely Puniſhed than Hereticks, Blaſphemers, and Contemners of Religion.

But what ſaid *Eraſmus*, Is it a greater Tranſgreſſion to be a Chriſtian than to be a Murtherer of Father or Mother, *&c.* But ſuch things ſhall the Devil raiſe up againſt the Goſpel; and oftentimes they are called *Hereticks*, who do ſo little contemn Religion, that they will die for their Religion; and therefore it appears (ſaid he) that they are no deſpiſers of Religion, who are ſo given up to Suffer, for to keep a good Conſcience before God.

Likewiſe, He appears to be free from Blaſphemy, who will rather die, than by imbracing Error will be freed from Death or Perſecution; ſuch appear to be free from Blaſpheming God willingly.

And as concerning the Life of Chriſt, that hath been alwayes ſo meek, that it is as poſſible to find an Example of a Lambs devouring of a Wolf, as of that putting a *Heretick* to Death by the Sword; and they in whom his Spirit dwelleth are minded like him: But as concerning Perſecutors, while in the New-Teſtament they find nothing but Meekneſs, which is directly contrary to their Perſecution (ſaid he) therefore are they neceſſitated to fly unto the Old, by which they ſuffiiently manifeſt whoſe Spirits Children they are.

This doth the multitude of the Martyrs testifie with their Innocent Blood, how that the true Believers, have Suffered as Hereticks, Blasphemers, Uproar-makers, Contemners of Religion, and Seducers, &c.

Yet it is a fast and certain Rule (saith the History) That where the Spirit of God and his truth hath place, that there must all Consultations of Persecutions cease; then much more the thing it self, knowing that their Weapons are wholly Spiritual (even as God and his whole Kingdom is) which must be used and felt, and keep the Authority; for there are (saith he) Weapons of Love, of Prayer, of Peace, and of Patience, whereby the inward Understanding of the Heart and Soul, may be brought unto the right Way: But what is Flesh and Blood with fleshly Weapons, alas (said he) in no wise fitting, but like unto the World, which run on in the broad Way to Destruction.

Moreover it is evident enough, for in the whole *Europa*, Experience hath learned it, that the cruel Condemning, Banishing, Persecuting and putting Hereticks to Death about Matters of Faith and Religion, is an absolute contrary means, for to rout out Hereticks, for to unite the divided Christendom, and to quiet its Disturbances.

And it hath also been found by Experience, that External Peace and Unity, can, and may be better preserved in a Kingdom or Common-wealth, through forbearance, and by Suffering of contrary Opinions (through Love and Christian Meekness) than by Banishing and Persecuting People to Death, about Matters of Faith and Religion.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

When the Biſhops began to ſeek the help of the Magiſtrate; How it then Miniſtered Offence; What Puniſhment the Church heretofore had (according to the Will of the Lord) for Hereticks; And how difficult a thing it is for Magiſtrates to judge aright in Matters of Hereſie.

ERaſmus Teſtified, That for above 400. Years, the Biſhops did not ſeek the help of the Emperors againſt the Hereticks; and when they did ſeek it againſt the inſufferable Wickedneſs of the *Donatiſten*, it did not pleaſe the good Party, that they ſhould then ſeek the help of the Civil Power; for they then Judged, that it became not the Biſhops to uſe any other Weapons, or to have any other Help, than the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, although the Evil was incurable, yet would they have excluded it by Excomunication, which is ſaid to be the greateſt Judgment or Puniſhment that then the Church had.

Now it is confeſſed, that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath manifeſted his Will by that which is left upon record, and which was delivered by his Apoſtles, who have ſhewn us how we ſhould carry our ſelves.

1. *Towards them that reſiſt the Truth*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 24, 25. *Chap.* 3. 6. 8. *Chap.* 4. 15.

2. *Towards Back-ſliders*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 20.

3. *Towards them that deny the Reſurrection*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 16, 18.

4. *Towards them that Teach what they ought not*, *Titus* 1. 11, 13.

5. *Towards them that cauſe Diviſions and Offences*, *Rom.* 16. 17.

6. *Towards falſe Prophets*, *Mat.* 7. 15. *Chap.* 16. 11, 12.

7. *Towards them that Walk Diſorderly*, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 6.

8. *Towards Phariſaical Hypocrites, that have the Form of Godlineſs, and not the Power*, *Luke* 12. 1. 2 *Tim.* 3. 5.

9. *Towards falſe Brethren*, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11.

10. *Towards Hereticks*, *Titus* 3. 10.
11. *Towards Fornicators, and Idolaters*, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11.
12. *Towards the Diſobedient*, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 14.
13. *Towards the Stiff-necked*, *Mat.* 18. 17.

Thus it appears from the Scripture of Truth, that it was not the Will of our Lord and Lawgiver, That they ſhould be puniſhed with ſevere Puniſhments in Priſons, or by Baniſhment, or by having their Goods ſpoyled, or by being put to Death; nay, but he hath rather commanded,

1. *That with Meekneſs we ſhould Inſtruct*, ——2 *Tim.* 24.25.
2. *Deliver unto Satan*, ——1 *Tim.* 1. 20.
3. *Sharply to rebuke*, ——*Tit.* 1. 11, 13.
4. *To avoid them*, *Rom.* 16. 17. 2 *Theſ.* 3. 6. 2 *Joh.* 10. 11.
5. *To beware of them*, ——*Mat.* 7. 15.
6. *To have no fellowſhip with them*, ——1 *Cor.* 5. 11.
7. *To reject them*, ——*Tit.* 3. 10. 2 *Tim.* 4. 15.
8. *To let them alone*, ——*Mat.* 15. 14.
9. *To eſteem them as Heathens or Publicans*, ——*Mat.* 18. 17.

Thus we ſee the Laws that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath ordained for their Puniſhment, to the end, that the Fruits hereafter mentioned might be brought forth; for God willeth not (as many blood thirſty Men) that they ſhould die and periſh; but the Will of God is,

That they all ſhould repent, ——2 *Pet* 3. 9. 2 *Tim.* 2. 25.
That they ceaſe from mens Traditions.
That they might be aſhamed, ——2 *Theſ.* 3. 14.
That they might learn not to Blaſpheme, ——1 *Tim.* 1. 20.
That they might be found in the Faith, ——*Tit.* 1. 13.
That the Spirit might be ſaved, ——1 *Cor.* 5. 5.

For the Power which the Lord hath given the Apoſtles, was to Edification, and not to Deſtruction, 2 *Cor.* 13. 10.

Eraſmus ſaid, The Chriſtian Meekneſs muſt ſatisfie it ſelf with theſe Puniſhments; to Stone, that is the Jewes work; but the true Chriſtians work is to Heal.

Ambroſius ſaid, That Hereticks were only to be Puniſhed by Excomunication, and not to be Beat and Perſecuted; for ſo did the Heathen ſaid he, that knew not God: And *Ignatius* ſaid, you ſhall ſeperate your ſelves from them, and exhort them to Repentance.

In

In Hæreticis coercendis quatenus progredi liceat ubi nominatius eos ultimo ſupplicio affici non deberi aperte demonſtratur, Chriſtlinge Impreſſum, Anno 1577. Sectio 2.

Chriſoſtomus ſaid, That he was not ſuch a Fool, as that he would ſuffer them to be his Judges who were his open Enemies, for it is againſt all right and reaſon, that he who is the Accuſer, and Witneſs, ſhould alſo be Judge. Every one (ſaith he) will be judge over another, yet none acknowledging the other to be his Judge.

Tell me then ye wiſe Men (who would have the Hereticks Puniſhed, or Perſecuted to Death by the Magiſtrate) who ſhall be the Judge, the Magiſtrate, the Church, or the Doctrin which is ſpoken againſt? And how ſhall the Magiſtrate be aſſured of the Odiouſneſs of the Blaſphemy, and Crimes? And how ſhall the Magiſtrate know certainly who are puniſhable *Siſmaticks*, *Apoſtates*, falſe Teachers, *Hereticks* and Seducers; who they are that ſet up a Sect or a Church? Who believe well or Evil? Who Teach according too, or contrary to the Scripture? Who are moved of God, or by his own Zeal? Who do according to a good Conſcience or contrary? Who are wounded and judged in themſelves, and who are not? And who are obſtinate and ſtiff-necked *Hereticks*, or conſtant upright *Chriſtians*?

But ſuppoſe the Magiſtrates ſhould refer this to the Divines or Clergy (ſaid he) to judge of, what more aſſurance ſhall they have than the Magiſtrate? who through their ſtrong importuning, blindly Perſecute the Hereticks, and have martyred and put to death moſt of the Chriſtians and Servants of God; (ſaid he) how can they then more than the Magiſtrate judge of ſuch hidden Myſteries as before mentioned? *Vide Synopſis Diſp. 57. Theſ. Chap.* 20.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

The neceſſity of juſt and equal Liberty; How expedient it is to hear and ſee before one Judge; How the Perſecuting Clergy do follow the Example of the Jewes; How Life and Converſation hath not been ſo much looked at, as difference in Doctrine and Worſhip; And how prejudicial it would be for Chriſtians, if their Counſel were followed, that ſtir up men to Perſecute.

A *Remnus* ſaid, The profitableneſs of the King and Kingdom, requireth a firm and intire Union of all the Citizens and Subjects; now there can be no firm Union (ſaid he) except that all the Citizens and Subjects injoy equality, and that eſpecially in matters of Religion; for inequallity among them in that particular, is and hath been of moſt Politicians called one Peſtilence of the Kingdom or Common-Wealth. *Anno* 1575. *Com. diſt. Fol.* 79.

Qui autem partem civium conſulunt, partem negligunt rem pernitioſiſſimam in civitatem inducunt. Cicero in offi.

When the King *Lodewick* of *France*, was much importuned by the Cardinals and Biſhops to put ſeveral People to Death in his Dominion, who were accuſed of much odious *Hereſie*; the King ſaid, If I were to begin a War with the Turk, or the Devil, I would firſt hear them: And afterwards he ſent *Legaten* to examine the matter, and when he found them to be ſuch in their Life and Converſation, and Worſhip, that he broke out with an Oath, and ſaid, *Theſe men are better than I with my Catholicks.* Urede hand. van *Colen.* Fol. 39.

The *Jewes*, *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, exclaimed againſt Chriſt to the *Magiſtrate*, and ſaid, *If he had not been an Evil doer, we would not have delivered Him up unto thee:* And then they accuſed Him *of perverting the Nation, of forbidding the People to give tribute to Caſar, of ſtirring up the People, of caſting out Devils through Beelzebub*; and they alſo ſaid, *That they had a Law, and that by that Law he ought to die*, &c. Luke 23. 2, 5. John 18. 30.

18. 30. Mark. 3. 21. John 19. 6, 7. Thus did they ſeek to deceive *Pilate*, who was unexperienced in their Law; even as the Clergy now (ſaid a certain Writer) ſtir up the Magiſtrates with their Lies, ſeeking to make them believe that they have a Law, by which *Hereticks* ought to be Perſecuted and put to Death; and by their *Sophiſtical Art* (ſaid he) can they prevaile with them ſo far, as that finally they (to continue their Friend, and the Emperours (or the Kings) deliver them into their hands as *Pilate* did Chriſt, who ſaid, *Take Him, and Judge Him according to your Law*, &c. Certainly ſaid one, where Chriſt is now made manifeſt, there are alſo *Judas's* to be found, the World is no better nor holier then it was, but rather worſe; and therefore doth the Truth now ſuffer under the name of Hereſie (ſaid he) as heretofore.

For now in theſe Dayes men do little regard Life or Converſation, but preſently fall upon judging of the Doctrine, Perſecuting and ſhamefully Intreating thoſe that differ from them in Doctrine, though their Life be never ſo good (ſaid he) but indeed they ought to do otherwiſe, and with the Spirit of Meekneſs to inſtruct thoſe that Erre, and not to put men to death for their Errors, which is indeed a very great Error.

Condonabiles ſunt quidem piorum hominum errores, ſicut et non quivis corporis morbus uxitialis eſt.

Certainly it is Unchriſtian-like, yea unnatural, That any ſhould judge a man to be an obſtinate Heretick, who lives a good life, and is of an upright mind, and who cannot comprehend the matter otherwiſe than he underſtandeth it, and thereupon is he reſolved to ſuffer whatſoever may come; but when they have nothing to charge againſt his Life, then rail they againſt his Doctrine; like as the Perſecutors of *Daniel* ſaid, *We ſhall have nothing againſt him, except it be concerning his Worſhip:* And as *Amazia* the Prieſt of *Bethel* informed the King againſt *Amos*, and accuſed him of Uproar, and told him that the Land could not bear all his Words, *Amos 7. 10. Dan. 6. 5. Acts 24. Jer. 26. 8, 9, 11.*

If one Sect ſhould riſe up againſt another, to the deſtroying one of another (which muſt needs follow, if their Counſel be followed,

followed, who would have Hereticks put to Death) then when they had deſtroyed one another, conſider then what a door there would be opened for the *Turk*, and for other *Barbarous* People, for them to take poſſeſſion of the remainder, and then to Tyrannize over them.

But as *Lactantius* ſaid, Even as they are deceived in the Religion it ſelf, ſo are they deceived in the manner of its Protection; for the true Religion is not to be defended with Killing, but with Exhorting; not with Cruelty, but with Patience; not with Wickedneſs, but by Faith: for they that go about to defend their Worſhip with Torments, they rather pollute it, than defend it.

CHAP. XIV.

Several Teſtimonies againſt Perſecution, and Forcing of Conſcience; Of the Liberty among the Heathen; How Meekneſs is better than War; How the Chriſtians Meetings were forbidden upon Pain of Death; And of the Efficacy of Faith and Patience.

Stephanus King of *Poland*, ſaid, It belongeth not to me to Reform the Conſcience, I have alwayes gladly given that over to God which belongeth to him, and ſo ſhall I do now; and alſo for the future, I will ſuffer the Weeds to grow until the time of Harveſt, for I know that the number of Believers is but ſmall; therefore ſaid he, when ſome were proceeding in Perſecution, *Ego ſum Rex Populorum non Conſcientiarum* (i. e.) I am King of the People, and not of their Conſciences: He alſo affirmed, That Religion was not to be planted with Fire and Sword. *Chron. van de Rel. vrijh. 2 deel.*

Tindallus (*apud Foxium in Actis et Monumentis*) ſaid, The New-Teſtament of Chriſt ſuffered no Law of Compelling, but alone of Perſwading and Exhorting, *pag.* 1338.

Timeſius, Exhorted the Emperor, To ceaſe from Perſecution, beſeeching him that he would not be cruel by reaſon of the diſcord or defference of the Chriſtians Doctrine, ſeeing there was ſuch a multitude of Sects among the Heathen; and that every

every one continue in his own Doctrine, contrary to the Meaning and Doctrine of the reſt.

The Prince of *Orange* Teſtified, That it was impoſſible that the Land ſhould be kept in Peace, except there was a free Toleration in the exerciſe of Religion, *Anno* 1579.

Swinckfeild teſtified, That according to the Doctrine of Chriſt and the Example of the Apoſtles, it did not become the Preachers of the Goſpel, and Miniſters of the New-Teſtament, in no wiſe to Force with Violence and Tyranny the Conſcience in Matters of Faith, but with the Sword of the Spirit, the Power of God, and with Prayer, were they to reſiſt the evil Spirit and all its Temptations, and with long Suffering learn to overcome them all.

The *Chronicle* teſtifieth, How that *Theodoſius* Perſecuted no Man, neither did he conſtrain any to hold Fellowſhip with him, but permitted every Man to meet in his own houſe, or at his own Meeting; and he being a very meek man, did thereby (to wit, through Meekneſs) ſooner bring his Snbjects to Obedience, than by War, neither would he Force the Conſciences of his Subjects. *Relig. Uriih.* pag. 6.

John Taulerius ſpoke alſo much in his Sermon Book, of the Tribulation, Oppreſſion and great Suffering, that the Chriſtians were to expect here, but not that he ſhould cauſe any of them to ſuffer.

The *Burgemeeſteren* of *Amſterdam* teſtified, That no man had Power to bind another mans Conſcience, let him be who he will (ſaid they) for this Power pertaineth only to God, under whoſe Command and Power the Conſcience is, *Anno* 1617.

Eraſmus ſaid, That though they take our Moneys and Goods, they cannot therefore hurt our Salvation; they afflict us much with Priſons, but they do not thereby ſeparate us from God: Moreover the Lord ſaid, *If they Perſecute you in one City, fly unto another*; thereby doth he teach (ſaith *Eras*) that perſecuted Chriſtians, ſhould not expel Weapons with Weapons, but rather fly before Weapons; for if *Peter* was reproved, becauſe he drew his Sword againſt the Wicked and Ungodly, for his harmleſs Lord; wherefore then ſhould a Chriſtian man for the future, revenge Wrong with Wrong, when it is done unto him? *In de Krijgdes urede. Fol.* 63.

Lactantius ſaid, We Chriſtians deſire not that any man againſt his Will ſhould ſerve our God, who is the Creator of all things, neither are we likewiſe angry if he be not ſerved; for we believe (ſaith he) that his Majeſty might as well revenge their deſpiſings, as he doth the injuries of his Servants: And therefore when we ſuffer ſuch ſhameful things, we keep ſilent, referring vengeance unto the Lord, and do not like unto thoſe who would be eſteemed Defenders of their Gods, who are full of Wrath againſt thoſe that do not honour them. *Rel. Uriih. pag.* 17.

We are aſſured (ſaid *Cyprianus*) That they that Perſecute us, ſhall not remain long unpuniſhed, and the greater Injuries which they have done, the more manifeſt revenge will come upon them; though we had no knowledge of the Antient times, yet notwithſtanding, that which of late hath happened, might ſerve for a ſufficient Warning, (to wit) that in ſo ſhort a time (ſaith he) ſo grievious and terrible a revenge is already come upon Perſecutors. *Merula.* pag. 214.

When *Cyprianus* was threatned to be Baniſhed out of the Land, except he would renounce the Chriſtian Religion; he replyed to thoſe that threatned him, and ſaid, He that carrieth Chriſt ſhut up in his Heart and Mind, can be no Exile or baniſhed Man, *For the Earth is the Lords, and the Fulneſs thereof.* Afterwards he was much urged by the Governour to betray his Brethren, to which he would in no wiſe condeſcend; and when the Governour told him, that the Emperour had forbidden the Meetings of the Chriſtians, that they ſhould not meet upon pain of death, then he gave the Governour to underſtand, that he was prepared to die for the Profeſſion of the Truth.

Moreover ſaid *Cyprianus*, Have we not ſeen that the Martyrs of Chriſt, did not look upon their Torments with cruel Eyes, neither did they threaten Tyrants, but was more ſorrowful for their Blindneſs, than for their own Suffering. *Anno* 1567.

Petrus Viretus ſaid, That there was nothing that ſooner broke the Violence of Tyranny, than the Patience of the Saints; neither was there any better means to take away the ſharpneſs of their Swords (ſaid he) and to quench and extinguiſh their Fire, than through Faith, Conſtancy and Prayer.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Auguſtinus's *Teſtimony*; *How* Ambroſius *was threatned*; *How private Meetings could not be prevented by Proclamations, &c. How it is the Duty of Chriſtians to continue their Meetings*; *And how we are to Obey God more than the Emperor or the King.*

Auguſtinus teſtified, That when Emperours were in Error, then did they make Laws for to defend Errors againſt the Truth; yet *Ambroſius* would not obey the Emperor in things that were contrary to God and his Commands, wherefore the Emperor threatned, that he would cut off his Head; then ſaid *Ambroſius*, *I will Suffer as a Biſhop, do thou as becometh an Executioner or Hangman.* Apoph. Fol. 144.

The *Chronicle* teſtifieth, How that in times paſt, private *Meetings* could never be hindred through rigorous *Proclamations*, ſtrict Orders, and Executions, nor yet Sects of ſiniſter Opinions, but by how much the more they were forbidden by Orders, and Perſecuted, by ſo much the more they Acted againſt the Orders. *Bor.* III. 6. 91.

Moreover it ſheweth, how the Martyrs in Tribulation were moſtly accuſed, becauſe they continued their *Meetings* contrary to the Command of the King. *Int Martel. lib.* 5. *pag.* 456.

This is the Duty of all the Faithful (ſaid a certain wiſe Man) That they continue their *Meetings* together in the name and fear of the Lord, though Kings, Princes, and Magiſtrates by their Proclamations and Orders command the contrary; for after the Apoſtle through many perils of his Life, had Preached the Doctrin of the Goſpel in Synagogues, Schools and Markets, and being reſiſted by open Violence, and forbidden to Preach any more in that Name, he notwithſtanding after that kept Meetings in private Houſes when he Preached.

Grotius teſtified, How that it was the Opinion of ſome, that they that did cruelly handle, ſuch as kept their *Meetings* (not to Gormandize or play the Glutton, nor to diſturb the publick

Peace, but as Schools of Vertue) were themſelves in ſuch a State, as ought to be puniſhed. *Vide Grot. lib. 2. pag. 445.*

The Hiſtory ſheweth, how that heretofore ſome ſaid, as others do now, That new things, as new Opinions, &c. are alwayes to be feared, eſpecially great *Meetings* and *Aſſemblies*; but (ſaid the Author) Men need not fear that Doctrine which tends to the bringing of People to Piety and Honeſty; neither need men be afraid of the Meetings of honeſt peaceable People, who ſeek not to keep themſelves private, except that they be thereunto conſtrained; concerning whom I may ſay (ſaid he) as *Auguſtus* ſaid concerning the Meetings of the Jews, that they were not to *Domineer*, nor to be exceſſive in eating and drinking, nor yet to diſturb the Peace, &c.

Anno 1560. In *Scotland* it was decreed and concluded, That People ſhould in all things, obey the Magiſtrates, Religion only excepted. *Hiſt. Georg. Fol.* 697.

Lucernus ſaid, He that commandeth any thing wherewith he bindeth the Conſcience, that is an Antichriſt. *Inde Bennſe Diſp. Fol.* 71.

Therefore ſaid *Eraſmus*, If that at any time Evangelical Godlineſs require that People muſt contemn their Commands, that muſt be done with ſuch moderation, as that it may not be through any hate againſt them, but through a godly Zeal. *Vide Exod.* 1. 16, 17, 21. Conſidering how that the Commands of God are to be eſteemed above the Commands of Men; *Obey your Maſters* (ſaith he) but not againſt God, to whom you are more bound than unto men.

Daniel kept himſelf Innocent before God and the King, notwithſtanding his doing contrary to the King's command, concerning the free Exerciſe of his Religion, *Dan.* 6. 22.

But ſay ſome, the Powers will not ſuffer this new Doctrine; I know not, but that they might well ſuffer it, where it fundamentally manifeſteth it ſelf, ſaid *Urbanus Regnis*; yet though they will not ſuffer it, every true Chriſtian knoweth that he ought to keep to the Lord and his Truth, and in ſuch a caſe he may (ſaid he) *without contempt of Authority*, let paſs that worldly command; and of this will the ſpiritual Law admit: For it doth not become the Emperour, nor the King to determine any thing

thing againſt the divine Command, nor to do any thing that is againſt the Rule of the Exangelical Prophets, and Apoſtles Truth; and if that they command any Evil, then muſt we give them this anſwer, *We muſt obey God rather than Men*, Acts 5. 29. But in theſe things which are not againſt the Command of God, we will be ſubject. Yet when the Emperour or King commandeth one thing, and God another, and that we obey God, who hath the Supream Power, we deſire herein to be excuſed by the Emperour and King; if they threaten Impriſonment for Diſobedience, he threatneth Hell. *Vide his Epiſtle of twofold Righteouſneſs, Fol. 6, 7. Anno 1532.*

CHAP. XVI.

How it doth not become the Magiſtrate to Force the Conſcience, nor to be a Judge in Points of Doctrine; and of what dangerous conſequence it would be, if the Magiſtrate ſhould proceed againſt Hereticks, according to his own Interpretation of the Law.

CAſtellius teſtified, That in Matters of Religion, there was no other Magiſtrate than Chriſt alone, and they that he (not with the Sword, but with his Word) armeth and ſendeth forth.

The Antient Proteſtants teſtified, How that the moſt of the old Fathers affirmed, That the Magiſtrate had nothing to do to meddle with the Conſcience, to force and compel that to believe, ſeeing that the temporal Sword was put into their Hands to Puniſh Theeves, Murderers, and other diſturbers of the Peace; but as concerning Religion, and that which pertaineth unto the Soul, the only Spiritual Sword, the Word of God, muſt and ought herein to Remedy, ſeparating the Zeal and Religion which did defend man from Tumults, and diſturbing of Governments. Neither doth it belong to any man to ordain other Laws for Puniſhment, beſides thoſe which God hath appointed; and therefore is it ſo highly forbidden to add or diminiſh, *Deut.* 4. 2. *Chap.* 12. 32. *Rev.* 22. 18. for no Laws but God's bind the Conſcience. *Merck-tyck, pag.* 245.

Moreover

Moreover it hath been formerly teſtified, That they do very unchriſtianly, who under pretence of Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline, introduce a new Authority over the Faith and Conſciences of Men, *Iſa.* 10. 12. *Pſal.* 94. 20, 21.

Acontius teſtified, That it was againſt the Office of a Magiſtrate to be a Judge in Points of Doctrine, in matters of Religion, and in the ſame to uſe his Power violently; and that in particular he ſhould do contrary to his Office, if that he uſed his Power to pleaſe any man, as that when he had committed the care of Religion to ſome particular Perſon or Perſons, and that he ſhould be ready to draw out his Sword againſt thoſe whom the other accuſed as Hereticks, or give the Weapon into their Hand: Now how guilty (he that thus did) would be in the day of the Lord, may you judge.

Alcmerus teſtified, That God alone is the judge of the heart, and that he alone ſhould judge of Faith and Unbelief; therefore is it not lawful for Princes (ſaid he) to judge any man in matters of Faith, while they are not guilty of any manifeſt tranſgreſſion of any known civil Law, as Theft, Murder, &c. for they are Judges of the Body, and not of the Soul, *Rel. writh.* 2 *deel. pag.* 52.

Through what impudency dare you judge them to Death (ſaith *Caſtellius*) that profeſs the name of Chriſt? who hath taught you the matters of Religion, of which you are moſt ignorant? I believe you will ſay, you do not theſe things alone from your own Judgement, but through the judgement of the Learned, who hath taught you, who ought to be Puniſhed, and put to Death; and verily it is ſo (ſaid he) for I ſee that your Learned men do injoyne you, not to put any to Death about Religion, but according to their Judgement.

W. Teelingh teſtified, That the Magiſtrate ought not to reſt upon the concluſion of the Church, nor thereupon to proceed, being that the Church might err, and that it was dangerous following. *De hevige ende hueſtige Kerckelijcke luijden* (i. e.) the vehement and haſty Clergy. *In Enbul.* 252. 254, 256, *Follies.*

The Lord of *Pleſſy* referred the Judgement of Doctrine and Teachers, &c. to the Judgement of all Chriſtians, and not only

only to the Judgement of the politick Magiſtrates, nor not alone to the Eccleſiaſtical Clergy, neither only to them both, no, but to all men. *Vide his Trac. of the Church, pag.* 80, 130, 147.

Experience hath ſufficiently demonſtrated, that it is a very hurtful thing, to compel all People to dance after the Magiſtrates Pipe (ſaid a certain Writer) for where it hath been ſo, Oh! what hath been the Effect thereof, but moſt commonly an Univerſal Deluſion of the Subjects, with a Bloody Perſecution of the true Prophets; for the greateſt multitude of men is never the beſt; as alſo the greateſt number of Emperors and Kings are not very Holy, but often have ſhewn themſelves (ſaith he) to be very wicked. *Merck-tyck. pag.* 307.

The Lord hath expreſly declared (ſaid one) That the Magiſtrate is no fit Judge to judge of Doctrine; and that the uſe of ſuch Juriſdiction is forbidden him. For how ſhall a man know a *Heretick* but by knowing the Cauſe, whereby a man is made a *Heretick?* And if the Magiſtrate do ſo interpret the Law, as that he thinketh thoſe *Hereticks* may be forgiven, who have not endeavoured to counſel others, and that they are to be put to Death, who perſevere in teaching others, and are reſolved ſo to do; ſhall men then be in ſafety, and their Credit and Welfare preſerved? certainly no; for ſo often as the Truth ſhall falſely be ſcandalized with the name of *Hereſie*, through the Orders of the Magiſtrate, ſo often ſhall the Servants of the Lord be thereby brought into Suffering; for it is not lawful for them to whom God hath manifeſted his Truth, to hide their Talent in the Earth, through ſilence and diſſimulation. *Vide Arg. des Sat. lib.* 3. *pag.* 184. *idem pag.* 94, 95.

With what clearer Example can the Magiſtrates be exhorted not to depend upon any mans Judgement, then that concerning the Son of God, who was ſo careleſly given over, not only according to the Judgement of his wicked and ungodly Enemies, but alſo according to their deſire. *Take Him* (ſaid *Pilate*) *and judge him according to your Law.* pag. 100.

David ſaid, *That Heaven was given to the Lord of Heaven, but the Earth unto the Children of men*; that is, God hath given man Power over earthly matters, and over whatſoever belong-

eth

eth unto Earthly Matters, but over Heavenly Matters, and theſe things which appertain unto the Kingdom of Heaven, the King of Heaven hath only dominion over. *Vred. hand. tor. Col. Fol.* 137, 195.

Regula ſit morte non puniendos, ſed Judex videat et ponderet.

CHAP. XVII.

How the Truth is Oppreſſed through ſomes Uſurpation; How the Proteſtants have been hindred from Printing of their Books; The unjuſtneſs of the thing; How it hath been the Papiſts doing, who will neither ſuffer Diſputations nor Books againſt themſelves; The Cauſe why; And how unjuſt a thing it is that one ſhould uſurp Authority over all the reſt, &c.

NOt without Reaſon are men offended, ſaid *Calvine*, when they ſee the Truth of God lye oppreſſed with Fire and Sword, and that none dare appear to help and defend the ſame; and that Error is ſo ſtrongly maintained with the Cloak of *Lawful Judgement*, that there is no Freedom to reprove and amend the ſame; neither will they that have the name of the Supream Authority, ſuffer any thing to be ſpoken that is contrary to their Inſtitutions; and if one reprove or rebuke them, and Teach any thing contrary to what they Teach, then do they account that to be uproariſh, when they themſelves are the moſt tumultuous, *Decl. Chap.* 14, 15. Further he added, That if they themſelves did not ſtir up the Mighty to ſhed Blood, there would never ariſe ſo many Uproars among the People.

And it was *Luthers* Opinion, That thoſe that ſtirred up the Princes to Perſecute about Religion, they raiſed the Uproar. *Theſaur. pag.* 679.

Likewiſe the Reformed Proteſtants complained of being forbidden to Print Bookes, and to Sell them, as appears from the *Chronicles*; which thing the Prince of *Orange* held for unfitting, *a Forcing of Conſcience*, a quenching of Propheſie, and an oppreſſing of the Truth. *Bor. Chron. ſecond part, Fol.* 48. 47.

The

The Papiſts counſelled the Emperour, the Princes and States, That they ſhould obſtruct Writing and Printing of Books, as alſo Diſputing and Preaching, otherwiſe than according to the Interpretation and Approbation of the Church; and that the Diſperſers of ſuch Books ſhould be Puniſhed. *Vide, Hiſtory of the Counſel of Trent. pag.* 42, 43.

When *Tacitus* had declared, How that the Lords Fathers had thought it good, to burn the Books of *Cremutius Cordus* (ſome of which were afterwards brought to light) he ſaid, He muſt laugh at the Folly of thoſe, who thought by their preſent Power, they could extinguiſh the remembrance of them from ages to come, for moſt commonly the contrary happens; and when men reprove the glorious Underſtandings, their honour and renown is not thereby diminiſhed, but rather augmented: Further (ſaid he) All Kings that have uſed great Tyranny in ſuch Caſes, have thereby brought contempt upon themſelves, and more honour and eſteem to the other. *Vide Annales, lib.* 3. *pag.* 22.

The Emperour *Nero*, cauſed the Books of *F. Veientio* (who reproved the Prieſts and the Council) to be burned; yet while they were to be gotten (notwithſtanding the danger) they were ſought and read, but afterwards People were permitted to have them and to read them.

[*Nota.*] When ſuch Writings (ſaid he) are little eſteemed, they periſh of themſelves, but when men are angry, then they come to be the more manifeſt; for the difficulty in procuring of them, ſharpeneth the Deſire, kindleth the Zeal, and bringeth the matter into more eſteem. *Pol.* 4. *Lipſi.* 6, *lib. Fol.* 354.

The Profeſſors of *Leyden* ſaid, That it ſounded ſtrange in their Ears, that Men were come to the forbidding of Books, and would not ſuffer them according to their Rights and Priviledges; A thing (ſaid they) for which People have juſtly exclaimed againſt the *Popiſh Government*, for *Liberty* herein chiefly conſiſteth, (*viz.*) that every one may freely ſpeak his Judgment; and heretofore it hath been eſteemed a mark of Tyranny, when People might not ſpeak their thoughts. *Vide their Remonſt. Anno* 1582. Verily (ſaid they further) Reaſon which op-

poseth all Tyranny, teacheth us in the general, that the truth can be no more than the Light constrained; therefore is it Tyrannical to forbid good Books, as the Apostate *Julianus* did.

The King of *Spain*, with other of the Popish Princes, will not suffer different Religions in their Dominion, nor yet Disputations about Religion, neither will they suffer any Books that speak in the least against their Orders and Religion; this do many reprove in the Papists, and yet would gladly have it so themselves.

They fear (said *Lactantius*) that being conquered by us, they should be constrained to give us the hand; whereby they sufficiently manifest the desparation of their corrupt Reason, seeing they dare not search nor enter into dispute with any, because they know they should soon be overcome; and so not searching, *they expel Wisdom, and set Violence in its place*; and being they endeavour to judge those as being guilty, whom they know well to be guiltless, yet will they not suffer their Innocency to be made manifest; as if it were more unreasonable to manifest Innocency, than to condemn them that have not been heard: But as I have said (said he) They fear that they should not be able to judge, if they heard; and therefore Tortour, Kill, and Banish they the Servants of the most high God, that is, righteous Men. *Lactant. lib. 5. Chap. 1.*

Certainly (said *Acontius*) If the Shepherds once get it so far, as that none may oppose them, then will they *Force* the poor People, and compel them to receive whatsoever they will; Then *woe be to us and our Posterity, and woe be to all honest People*; if it once come again so far, that the just and equal defence against the Learned, should be esteemed Calumnies, Wickedness, and *Crimen læsæ Majestatis. Arg. des sat. lib. 3. Fol. 97.* For the *Pope Innocentius* the third, made a Law, That he that presumed to Blaspheme the Pope, was to be Punished with death, neither was any to speak against him, nor against the Church of *Rome*, which were not to be judged by any man: Likewise a Synod at *Rome* made a Decree, That none in the World should speak against the Church of *Rome*; and cruelly did they Persecute those that did contrary to their Decree. *Merul. pag. 783, 787, 741, 748.*

At

At *Geneva* it was also forbidden by a Proclamation, that any should speak against *Calvin* and his Doctrine. *An.* 1553. *Anno* 1619. There were several of the Clergy in the Low-Country, that thought it needful that some Order was taken, for the preventing and dispersing of such Books as they thought unfitting.

If that one Church or Teacher (said *Castel.*) be only tolerated, to reprove, vilifie, and falsely to accuse all other, and that without permitting any Opposition, Defence or Reply; how can such clear themselves from being of those, who will be Holier than others? And how can they reprove that great Wickedness in the Papists of cutting out Peoples Tongues (or depriving them of the power of Speaking) while they do the same, though in another manner. *Castel. cal. Chap.* 19.

With diligence do they hinder so much as they can any Books being Written or Printed against them, to the end, that they might not be made manifest; and if they be Printed, that they may not be sold but burned; and moreover, if any have them, such are to be Banished and esteemed as *Hereticks. Merck-tyck.* pag. 315.

If that some had Power according to their Wills (said one) all should finally be esteemed and holden for Blasphemers and Hereticks, that reprove any Divine of any Error, or that is of another Opinion in Points of Religion. *Chron. vande Rel. uriib.* 223.

But said the *Duke of Saxon*, It would tend to much praise, if they by their Doings and Authority did bring it to pass, that this Controversie might not be ended with Arms or Weapons, but that an orderly course might be maintained, which would heal the Sickness, reconcile the Church or People, and do no Violence to the Consciences of Men. *Vide* John Sleid. *Chron. lib.* 10.

God's Mercy and Judgment rationally ſhewn to England.

HEar O *England*, and conſider the things which the Lord hath done in thee, and ſuffer me a little to reaſon with thee, thou choiceſt of the Nations, and much Renowned among God's People; In thee hath the Light, Glory, and Power of the Lord of Hoſts appeared; in thee hath the Standard of the Lord been ſet up; in thee hath the acceptable Day of Salvation and Deliverance been Proclaimed; in thee hath many Prophets and Hand-maids been brought forth, which have gone out of thee into other Nations, and thou haſt been as a *Nurſery* unto them; in thee hath the everlaſting Goſpel been Preached freely, both in thy *Steeple-houſes*, *Markets*, *High-wayes*, and in many other Places; in thee hath the Way of Life, Peace, and Everlaſting Salvation been made manifeſt; yea, in thee hath the God of Heaven thy Creator, done many notable and wonderful things; And what! wilt thou now undo thy ſelf by reſiſting the Lord, by rebelling againſt Him, and by chuſing thy own Wayes, by fulfilling thy own Luſts, and by ſatisfying thy own Deſires, by Perſecuting and ſhamefully Intreating the Servants and Hand-maids of the Moſt High? Of which things thou wouldſt not have become ſo highly guilty, hadſt thou not rebelled againſt the Light of the Lord which is ariſen in thee, and reſiſted his Eternal Power and Counſel, which is broke forth in the midſt of thee; many beſides my ſelf lament over thee, and the Hearts of many have been filled with Sorrow and Heavineſs, by reaſon of thy Degeneration and Apoſtaſie, by reaſon

of

of thy Violence and Cruelty, and by reaſon of thy Perſecution and Oppreſſion; Oh! alas for thee, how ſhalt thou avoid the Wrath that is to come, or eſcape the Hand of the Lord? yet thy Deſtruction will be of thy ſelf, and thy Iniquities the Cauſe of thy Judgement.

But hear and conſider, and ſuffer me to reaſon a little with thee; Was thy King reduced out of his deplorable Sufferings in forragin Parts, and Peaceably introduced into thee, to connive at the grievous Suffering of the Innocent in thee? Have thy Parliaments and Councils been broken to pieces, and with contempt ſecluded, to the end that others might come in, to make *Acts* and *Laws* for the *Binding* and *Forcing* of the Conſciences of the Lords dear Children? Were thy Biſhops reinſtalled to exerciſe Lordſhip over Gods Heritage, and to augment the Sufferings of the afflicted in thee? Were thy Judges and Juſtices (together with many inferior Officers) turned out of their Places, that others who are more deboyſt might come in, to Oppreſs and Perſecute the Harmleſs, more than heretofore, in thee? Were thy high, notional pretended gifted Prieſts ejected, that they that are more Lewd and Prophane, might be brought in? Yet greater havock and ſpoile to make of the Saints, and of their Subſtance, than their Predeceſſors did? *In ſumma,* Was that notable overturning and remarkable change, which of late happened in thee, to this end? Or was it not rather to manifeſt the Power of the Moſt High, and his wonderful Works in thee, that thy Inhabitants might know that he alone will Rule, not alone in thee, but in all the Kingdoms of the whole Earth.

Moreover, conſider whether or no it hath been for thy Profit and Honour, to have ſo many of the Lord's

Servants

Servants and Hand-maids in thy Goals, Dungeons and Houſes of Correction; and ſo many Drunkards and Swearers, Cozenners and Cheaters, at Liberty in thy Cities, Towns and Villages? Is it for thy Honour, and the Welfare of thy Inhabitants Souls, that Covetous and Proud men, yea ſuch as God never ſent, ſhould have their free Liberty to Preach in thee for their Heir, and that the true Meſſengers and Servants of the Lord (who Preach freely) ſhould be caſt into Holes and Dungeons, thereby to ſilence them, or to prevent them from ſpreading God's Truth abroad in thee? Is it for thy Profit and Advantage, that faithful and diſcreet Merchants, truſty and laborious Tradeſmen, diligent and expert Marriners, careful and induſtrious Husband-men, ſhould be deprived of their Liberty, about the exerciſe of their Conſcience, and thereby conſequently obſtructed from getting a comfortable Livelihood for themſelves and their Families? How think'ſt thou ſhall they be able to Pay all the Cuſtomes, Taxes, Dues, Rights, and Aſſeſsments, &c. that are required in thee of thy Inhabitants? How ſhall they poſſibly diſcharge thoſe I ſay, if they do not injoy their Liberty and the Priviledges of free-born Engliſh-men; and if they thereby come to be Impoveriſhed, what will their Impoveriſhment enrich thee? Or who is there in thee that will willingly relieve and maintain ſuch, if external Poverty ſhould overtake them? Were it not therefore better for thee to let them injoy their Liberty (notwithſtanding their different Judgment in matters of Religion, provided that they lived Peaceably in the Kingdom) that through Diligence and Induſtry, they might win or gain their own Bread, though with the Sweat of their Browes, that the Land might ſo much the better yeild her Increaſe,

creaſe, and that Trading in thee might not decay, to the Impoveriſhing of many more Families, whoſe Livelihood depends upon their Trade, which can ſcarcely go well when the Father or Maſter of it is caſt into a Priſon for the Exerciſe of his Couſcience? which things I know will tend to the laying of thee waſte, and to the depopulating of thee, even as many Parts of *Germany* and other Countries, have been laid waſte and ruined; which deſolation hath had its riſe from ſuch differences in part, as ſeem to ariſe in thee, which in proceſs of time may produce the like Effects, if God in his Mercy, through his Power and Wiſdom do not direct them. Though this brief Hint which I ſignifie hereof to thee, may be little regarded by thee, yet when thou haſt felt the ſmart of it, then mayeſt thou lament it as other places have done, and remember that it was told thee before it came upon thee: And this ſhall I add further (*viz.*) If thy Land open her Mouth to drink the Blood of the Saints (after which it ſeems to thirſt already) then expect thou the coming of the overflowing ſcourge ſuddenly, which hath been heavy upon other Countries, who have polluted themſelves with the Blood of the Lamb's Followers, from which horrible thing, *the Lord deliver Thee.* Though I am not within thy *Territories*, yet my Spirit is preſent with the ſuffering Seed in thy Dominion; for the deliverance of which my Soul hath often interceeded unto the Lord; and know aſſuredly, that in true and entire Love to thee, have I laid theſe things before thee, for thy Inhabitants (my Country-men) to weigh and conſider in the Light of the Lord.

Germany *the* 17th. *of the* 11th. *Month*, 1661. *But Tranſcribed in* Amſterdam *the ſecond Month*, 1662. W. C.

FINIS.

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